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HISTORY OF LIBERTY.

PART II.

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

HISTORY

OF

LIBERTY.

PART II.

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

BY

SAMUEL ELIOT.

"He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world."
St. Matthew, xiii. 37, 38.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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BOOK I.

THE SEED.

A. D. 1–100.

"L'avenir, c'est le présent bien vu"

BALLANCHE, Élégie vii.

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BOOK I.

THE SEED.

CHAPTER I.

A NEW LIBERTY.

"Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet"
TENNYSON.

THE face of the earth was unchanged. Its mountains still stood firm. Its streams still flowed, its seas still swelled. Its inorganic bodies wore their wonted forms. Its living things obeyed the original laws of their existence and their increase. But the race to which dominion had been promised over all the earth and all that moved upon the earth was changed as if it had proved itself the slave, rather than the lord of the creation.

Nations once the highest were tottering or fallen. Others, still retaining their early institutions, were not so much independent as isolated, and to such an extent, in certain instances, that their participation in the great destinies of humanity seemed to have been cut off for ever. All those more directly engaged in

the recent or the approaching movements of their race were subject to a people themselves subjugated by one of their own number. The hordes of the North were pursuing their weary marches in search of better habitations than those which they had successively lost. Or if they showed no signs of having borne reverses, they were not the less submissive to customs or institutions demanding the sacrifice of their reason at the altar, as well as of their blood upon the battle-field. A humiliation thus universal was the issue of the liberty that had prevailed.

What this liberty had been, appears from the ideas entertained concerning its preservation or its recovery. The battle-cries of the North were raised by tribes who boasted of their independence as the right to conquer and to rule. A line of nations in the East slumbered in an inactivity seldom interrupted by thoughts of liberty. But if such thoughts arose, they led the ruler to bind new chains upon the subject, while they excited the subject to bind chains, in his turn, upon the ruler. Wherever the desire of liberty lingered in the Roman provinces, it appeared as the passion for authority. If the subjects armed themselves, it was to be once more masters rather than freemen. The Jew, for instance, believed in liberty not merely as the rescue of his country from its alien princes or its Roman governors, but as its exaltation to a supremacy of its own over other nations. The ideas of the dominant race were the same. The Roman had submitted to the imperial yoke. But he was still the superior among the nations upon whom that yoke

had been imposed. He could rise, he thought, whether others could or not, against his sovereigns. But it was not to make himself free, so much as to make himself also a sovereign, that he would rise.

The old liberty was the liberty of rulers. As such it was remembered. As such it was the object of longings and strivings on the part of those by whom, or by whose ancestors, it had once been possessed. The loss which they felt most keenly was that of dominion. The gain of dominion was that for which they struggled most resolutely. They thought themselves struggling for liberty. They thought themselves lamenting for liberty. But it was because liberty and dominion had been one and the same throughout the ancient ages. Liberty had belonged to none but rulers.

To recover or to preserve such a liberty as this, was not the want of mankind. The ruling classes of the West and of the East constituted but a small portion of the generations then existing. Not one man out of a thousand, out of a million, but was a subject in one or in another degree. The great need was of a liberty which should belong to these multitudinous subjects as well as to their scattered rulers. The liberty of the ruler had failed. The liberty of the subject was the liberty now required.

Of its possibility there might well be doubts. Indeed it was so seemingly an impossibility, that there were few thoughts, still fewer deeds excited by the conception of it or the desire for it. Whenever it was desired or imagined, whenever a man acted or thought as though he had such a liberty before him,

he did so but for a moment. His relapse into the prevailing subjection was almost as swift as it was sure. The winter of ages upon ages had settled upon human freedom. Its warm currents had been congealed into one vast frigid glacier, burdened by boulders from the cliffs above, and moving only to sink lower and lower into the depths beneath. Would the sun ever shine, would the spring or the summer ever glow so ardently as to loosen the icy masses of the past? Would the subject, bound, oppressed, degraded, as he was, attain to liberty? It must have appeared impossible.

So, indeed, it was until marvellous changes should have been wrought. As yet there was no law to support the liberty of the subject. Every statute, known or imagined, commanded him to serve without the hope of freedom. Everywhere the claims of his ruler extinguished his own. If he could be liberated at all, it must be by a law that was yet to come. Nor was it to come from man. Human laws had supported liberty only as the liberty of the ruler. It could not become the liberty of the subject until a law had been revealed from God.

Besides the change in law, there was to be a change in powers amongst men. Up to this time, they had neither exercised nor appeared to possess powers that gave them the right to general liberty. These would be called forth by the law that was to come. But the call was to be heard, the powers were actually to come forth, before the right of the subject to liberty could be securely established. Hitherto he had been conscious only of such powers

as his rulers could at any time restrain. The powers which no ruler could restrain were those to be introduced in place of such as had been abused and oppressed.

With the new powers and under the new law, the new liberty would be ushered in. What it would be in all respects will appear as we proceed. It is enough, at the outset, to call it the liberty of the subject. It would not be a liberty to which the ruler could obtain no right, and of which he could gain no possession. On the contrary, it would be open to all understanding their responsibilities as well as their privileges, their dependence as well as their independence. But while the new liberty would be open to the ruler, it would be both desired and attained not so much by him as by the subject.

Nothing could more decisively oppose the ancient centralization. By that system society had been established to the exaltation of the few alone. To them the many had been bound, body and soul, in debasement. With such a system the liberty of the ruler alone could harmonize. The liberty of the subject was fatal to the centralization of ancient times.

It was proportionally favorable to the union of modern times. According to this system, society would be constituted upon the same terms for the many as for the few. There would always be the few, distinguished for endowments, for capacities, for various advantages and for various influences. But to these the many would no more be chained as they had been. The liberty of the subject was the means of preparation for union.

The readiness to embrace the new liberty was far from being general. It was towards the old liberty, as has been said, that most men turned their faces. A single people had been forewarned that succor would come when the measure of their calamities was full. Even they, the Jews themselves, stood in defiant attitude, expecting vengeance, domination, a king, a conqueror, any one but a liberator, any thing but liberation, in the new sense. Other nations were still less ready to turn to the new liberty. But it was close at hand. The Infinite Mercy that had watched over the servitude of the past was about to open the portals to the liberty of the future.

CHAPTER II.

THE LAW OF LOVE.

"If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." — S. John, viii. 36.

Our Lord and Saviour appeared amongst the subjects of the earth. Born in a manger, bred as the son of an artisan,[1] He passed not only His childhood but His early manhood, surrounded with all the ignorances[2] and the sufferings[3] of the inferior classes by whom the world was peopled.

It was to them that He set the example of humility. Waiting while another went forth to preach repentance and remission of sins, He came at length to John the Baptist, not to assume the majesty foretold by that prophet, but to stoop to be baptized. From the light that shone through the opening heavens, He withdrew to the darksome wilderness. Thence He issued to choose his first disciples from the lowliest of the people. His first

[1] "Is not this the carpenter's son?" S. Matt., xiii. 55.

[2] "How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" S. John, vii. 15.

[3] "When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd." S Matt., ix. 36.

miracle was wrought at the most retired of festivals in a country village. A ruler was left with vague instruction concerning the events by which he had been moved to seek Jesus at Jerusalem.[4] But to a Samaritan woman of despised birth and sinful life, He revealed the worship of the Father and the advent of the long expected Messiah.[5] Throughout His subsequent course, He frequently refused the praise of those whom He healed or enlightened.[6] Still more decided was His rejection of the homage with which the excited multitude would have hailed Him king.[7] Even the more consistent reverence of His nearest followers was continually checked by reiterated prophecies of the ignominy in store for them and for Him.[8]

At the same time that He set the example of humility to the subjects around Him, He gave them the promise of an elevation such as neither subjects nor rulers had ever obtained. The assembly in the synagogue at Nazareth heard Him declare that He had come according to the ancient prophecy, to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken-hearted, to deliver the captive, to restore the blind, and to set the oppressed at liberty.[9] Such as these were the hearers when he cried, "Repent! The time

[4] "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" S. John, III. 12.

[5] S. John, IV. 6–43.

[6] S. Matt., VIII. 4, IX. 30, XII. 16; S. Mark, I. 44, III. 12, V. 43, VII. 36, VIII. 26; S. Luke, V. 14, VIII. 56.

[7] S. John, VI. 15.

[8] S. Matt., XVI. 13–23, XVII. 1–12, 22, 23; S. Mark, VIII. 27–33, IX. 2-10, 30–32; S. Luke, IX. 18–22, 43–45.

[9] S. Luke, IV. 16–21.

"He came, Heaven-fraught with liberty."
CHATTERTON.

is fulfilled, and the kingdom of Heaven is at hand! Repent ye, and believe the Gospel!"[10] Such as these listened to Him as He promised, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness! For they shall be filled. . . . . Blessed are the poor in spirit! For theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."[11]

To the same humble followers the truth was gradually unfolded. "I must be about my Father's business," were the words of Jesus in His youth.[12] "The hour cometh, and now is," was the language which He used to the woman of Samaria, "when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father seeketh such to worship Him."[13] "Behold the fowls of the air," urged the Sermon on the Mount. "For they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"[14] "He maketh His sun," it was declared in the same sermon, "to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."[15] "Fear not, little flock," heard the timid disciples, "for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."[16] The Father in Heaven was thus a God of infinite mercy as well as of infinite power.[17]

[10] S. Matt., iv. 17; S. Mark, i. 15.

[11] S. Matt., v. 3-12. "Dichiara, nobilita, santifica, abbellisce il dolore." Gioberti, Del Buono, cap. 5.

[12] S. Luke, ii. 49.

[13] S. John, iv. 23.

[14] S. Matt., v. 45.

[15] Ib., vi. 26.

[16] S. Luke, xii. 32.

[17] "Jesus represented the only true God as a Father; not in the sense in which this phrase had sometimes been employed among the Jews and Heathen, who by it designated the Author, Creator and

To make this revelation, God sent His Son. "Neither knoweth any man the Father," was the solemn asseveration, "save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."[18] "If God were your Father," said Jesus to the impassioned Jews, "ye would love me. For I proceeded forth, and came from God."[19] "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," declared the Saviour to His disciples when their hearts were troubled. "No man cometh unto their Father but by Me."[20] "This," He assured the multitude at Capernaum, "is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."[21] Again the assurance of love mingled with the revelation: "For God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish."[22]

The days passed. The close of the Saviour's earthly existence was at hand. "It is expedient for you," He said to His disciples, "that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you."[23] "When He," added Jesus, "the Spirit of Truth is come, He will guide you into all truth."[24] The truth which the Saviour had proclaimed was to be confirmed by the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. The name, the work of the Spirit, set the seal upon the love of which humanity was declared the object.

Lord; — but to express the disposition and feeling of God toward mankind." Reinhard, Plan of the Founder of Christianity, Am. trans. pp. 43–45.

[18] S. Matt., xi. 27; S. Luke, x. 22.

[19] S. John, viii. 42.

[20] Ib., xiv. 6.

[21] Ib., vi. 29.

[22] Ib., iii. 16.

[23] Ib., xvi. 7.

[24] Ib., xvi. 13.

So ineffable was the mercy of the Deity. A new aspect came over human life. Men looked up no more to offended or polluted divinities, but to a Father, a Son, and a Holy Spirit of perfect tenderness, of perfect majesty. The mercy of God assured the liberation of man. He was no longer the creature of terrors in connection with the unseen world. The misery of superstition, of awe unmingled with trust or hope, was at an end. Nor could man be any longer the victim of the oppressions existing in the visible world. His being, his affections, his possessions depended no more upon his fellow-men and upon them alone. Whatever he had, whatever he hoped to have, must come from God. Such was the liberation of mankind.

Nor was it confined to this life. "This," declared the Son, "is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life. . . . . I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life."[25] The liberation of man, the mercy of God were thus extended beyond the tomb.

Inconceivably solemn was the position of humanity. It had received the revelation of its origin, its course, its destiny. But its powers were not yet declared. Its duties were not yet revealed. We can imagine men bending before the Saviour in adoration. There must still have been a doubt, a longing in their hearts. "Master," one came and said, "what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

[25] S. John, VI. 40, 47

As if he had felt in common with those around him, that man must do something to deserve the liberation, the mercy that had been revealed. Jesus encouraged the feeling: "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."[26] There was then a work for man. He had duties. He had therefore powers.

What these were appeared in the proclamation of the law of love. The first commandment enjoined the love of God. The second, declared to be like the first, enjoined the love of man. The commandment to love God was given once for all. That to love man, as if its unexpectedness, so to speak, its difficulty seemed greater to so divided a generation, was earnestly repeated. "I say unto you," insisted the Saviour in His first discourse, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you."[27] Amongst the last injunctions to His disciples, He reiterated:—"This I command you that ye love one another, as I have loved you. . . . . These things I command you, that ye love one another."[28]

This was the law of which the want had been proved by ages of division and oppression. It came from no changing Cæsars; but from the Unchanging God. It therefore bade men do what they most needed to do. It made no requisitions that were of advantage to the few by whom or for whom they

[26] S. Matt., xix. 16, 17.
[27] Ib, v. 43 *et seq.*
[28] S. John, xv. 12 – 17.

were fulfilled. It commanded what was good for the many as for the few. Its penalties were as universal as its promises. The few were held to as profound submission as the many, the many to as entire obedience as the few. All were called to obey it, to be equally punished for disobedience, to be equally rewarded for obedience. When had such a law as this been revealed to the whole race of man? It was indeed the new law.

New likewise were the powers evoked by it. Hitherto, the powers developed in man had been such as the few could restrict in others, if they did not engross them to themselves. But few could be physically, but few could be intellectually powerful. Or if the powers of mind or body were exerted by more than the few, the few could always restrain them. There were no powers of the heart, no spiritual powers to which all could attain and which all could exercise, until they were called forth by the law of love. It was this that made the many as well as the few able to exert the highest of human powers.

Thus was the new liberty established. The new powers which man was enabled to exercise gave him the right to a new liberty. The new right was secured as a possession by the new law which he had received. He was free to obey the Divine law. He was free to put forth the powers which obedience to that law implies. The freedom to serve God was the new freedom. The liberty to love God and to love man was the new liberty. It was the liberty of the subject.

The ruler was not excluded. But in rendering his service according to the powers with which he was endowed, he also became a subject. However superior amongst men, he was the subject of God. He was free, if free at all, as a subject rather than as a ruler. "We know," said Jesus to His followers, "that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them. . . . . But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be servant of all."[29] "Neither be ye called Masters," He commanded the multitude. "For one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren."[30]

Not at once, not for centuries upon centuries, would all the results appear. But they might be foreseen. The night of centralization would not immediately terminate. Nor would the day of union immediately dawn. But the morning light was beginning to break. Its noon-day radiance was assured. The votaries of the law of love would draw together, not that one man or that one class of men might lord it over the rest. Some would rule, others would obey. But all, were they faithful, would serve. They would serve God. They would serve one another. Their service was love. Their love was union. The tendency to union amongst man-

[29] S. Matt., xx. 20–28; S. Mark, x. 35–45.

[30] S. Matt., xxiii. 8–10. "And," as one of the early Christians exclaimed, "most of the oppression that had been was dissolved."—Eus., Dem. Ev., vii. 2.

kind at large was as sure to increase, as the law by which it was aroused was certain to prevail.

To carry out this tendency was the work of the Early Christians. They could not establish union. But they could prepare it. Theirs it was to gather up the crumbs from the Master's table. Theirs it was to guard the store until others should come to share in it and defend its holy truths with increasing numbers and increasing affections. The work was one of sacrifice, of struggle, sometimes of agony. But it was sustained amidst all despairs, all failures of earth by the triumphs, the immortal hopes of Heaven.[31] Religion had been one thing and liberty another in the times of old. In the times to come they were appointed to be one.[32]

Meanwhile the mortal life of Christ had been ended. The multitude assembled at Jerusalem at length went out with branches of palm-trees to meet their Lord and Saviour. "Blessed is the King of Israel!" shouted the tumultuous throng. "Blessed is the King!" cried the disciples attending Him, "that cometh in the name of the Lord!" But He, when near enough to behold the city from the mount of Olives, stayed to weep. "If thou hadst known, even thou," He murmured, "the things which belong unto thy peace."[33] Not to the throne, which His impatient followers would have had him ascend,

[31] "Facta hominis gradus es quo possit in æthera ferri."
PAULINUS NOLANUS

[32] "Companion of religion, where she came, There freedom came; where dwelt, there freedom dwelt, Ruled where she ruled, expired where she expired." POLLOK.

[33] S. John, XII. 12, 13; S. Luke, XIX. 37-44.

did He press on. But to the cross. No sounds of disappointment or of remonstrance escaped His lips on the terrible Calvary. For the Jews who had demanded, for the Romans who had allowed His crucifixion, He had only a prayer that they might be forgiven. For the followers who had forsaken Him, there was no expression of reproach. For those who had doubted Him, there was no word of exultation that His truth had been proved by the sufferings which He had predicted, and to which He had submitted. To the single disciple whom He beheld, He spoke but to entrust His mother to his care. Nor did He say more to any one, except to promise the repentant malefactor admission into Heaven.[34] When the time of his entombment had passed, He rose to show Himself, first to a feeble woman, and next to the disciple by whom He had been denied. Even when He stood in the midst of His united followers, it was not for Himself that He spoke, but for "every creature" to whom the Gospel was yet to be preached. "Wait," He said in His last interview with His disciples, "Wait for the promise of the Father, and ye shall be witnesses unto Me.[35]"

Such a Saviour as this was rejected by the Jews. They could not comprehend Him. His life seemed to them an affront, His death an outrage[36] to all their expectations of liberty. The Romans

[34] S. Luke, xxiii. 34, 43; S. John, xix. 26, 27.

[35] Acts, i. 4, 8.

[36] According to the common belief, the death of the Messiah was an impossibility. Tzschirner, Geschichte der Apologetik, pp. 40 *et seq.*

took no thought of Him. To those who heard of Him He appeared in no way connected with their liberties. He was never even heard of by far the greater number. Only to His followers, the few publicans, fishermen, peasants and women, whom He had chosen, did He leave the liberty ordained by the law of love.[37]

[37] "But He our life hath left unto us free . . .
Ne ought demaunds but that we loving be."
SPENSER.

CHAPTER III.

DELIVERANCE FROM THE JEWISH LAW.

"We are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held. That we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." S. Paul, Rom., vii. 6.

The Jewish law was, in part, Divine. But so thickly had the traditions of men been grafted upon the original stock, that the law was, in greater part, human.

Being human, it maintained the old liberty. The worship of the Deity was regarded by the worshippers as authorizing their separation from other nations until these should be united to the worshippers as their subjects. In this right to rule, the liberty of the Jews, like that of other ancient nations, consisted. But there was a distinction between the claims of other races and those of the Jews to dominion. The latter considered their claims as resting upon the support of Jehovah. The centralization elsewhere upheld by merely human laws was the more threatening in Judea on account of being there upheld by laws regarded as Divine.

To these laws appeal was made against the yoke now pressing upon the nation. The answer returned that the Jews must rise in insurrection against Rome. This was the indispensable condition to their being free at all. Then they must beat down Rome and the universe. This was the indispensable condition to their being what they deemed really free. Not until these things had come to pass would the Jewish liberty be established.

Such were the influences to which the early disciples were exposed. Their Master had declared His having come "not to destroy, but to fulfil the law" of their race. Could they doubt that He purposed to liberate them from the Roman dominion? Could they distrust their exaltation to a dominion of their own? It would have been difficult.[1] The natural associations of home and of faith were heightened by the sanctity still attached to the law, by the majesty still belonging to the chosen city, Jerusalem, crowded, as it was, with synagogues[2] and with pilgrims. Vainly did Jesus remind the Apostles, as the closing scenes approached: "Ye have not chosen Me; but I have chosen you and ordained you."[3] The last question addressed by them to their risen Saviour betrayed their yearnings. "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"[4]

[1] "For there were many things," says Origen, (Cont. Cels., II. 2,) "which the Apostles who had been born and bred among the Jews, could not consider clearly."

[2] Vitringa (De Syn. Vet., Proleg., cap. IV, p. 28,) states on the authority of the Talmud that there were 480 synagogues at Jerusalem.

[3] S. John, xv. 16.

[4] Acts, I. 6.

"It is not for you," was the solemn reply, "to know the times. . . . . But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." This was the parting declaration of the Saviour. But that it might not be misunderstood, He added, "And ye shall be witnesses unto Me." Even this was not to be amongst the Jews alone. "Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."[5] It was no promise of supremacy to the Jewish law that Jesus uttered. On the contrary, it was the promise of deliverance from the Jewish law.

Partially, it was thus accepted. The little band received the descending Spirit in place of their ascended Lord. In open view of the place where He suffered, His Apostles began upon the holy enterprise to which they had been called. Arrested by the Jewish authorities, and threatened with the same punishment that had been inflicted upon their Master, they stood undaunted. "We cannot but speak," declared St. Peter and St. John, "the things which we have seen and heard."[6] When seized again with their companions, they exclaimed, "We ought to obey God rather than man."[7] It was declaring their independence of the Jewish law.

But the declaration was not yet decisive. "Unto you first," proclaimed St. Peter to the multitude at Jerusalem, "God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you."[8] "Him," he repeated be-

[5] Acts, I. 7, 8.
[6] Ib, IV. 20.
[7] Ib, v. 29.
[8] Ib., III. 26.

fore the Jewish council, "hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel."[9] The deference to the Jewish law is plain. So plain was it to those who heard the Apostle, that one of the council recommended the dismissal of St. Peter and his associates without further injury. A greater independence than this was needed to be declared.

Among those first joining themselves to the Apostles were many Jews born on foreign soil. Devoted though they might be to the law of their fatherland, they were generally regarded as an inferior order by the native Jews.[10] Murmurs of neglect[11] were soon heard amongst the foreign converts of the Apostles. So serious, indeed, were the complaints as to bring about the appointment of seven men, probably from the complaining party, to watch over their interests. First of the seven was Stephen, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost." His preferment, in these circumstances, implies the lead which he had taken in supporting the claims of the foreign converts. The struggle which he had maintained against the native Jews

[9] Acts, v. 31.

[10] "Judæi sic distinguebantur: Judæi Palæstini, qui hic Hebræi vocantur, et διασπορὰ Ἑλλήνων, qui hic Hellenistæ sive Græcienses. Jam vero inter Judæos in Palæstina viventes et Hellenistas Judæos extra Palæstinam viventes magnum fuit odium, tum propter diversitatem sermonis, quoniam hi lingua Græca, non sancta (ut illi opinati sunt) utebantur . . . tum etiam quia extra sanctam terram inter paganos homines, ergo inter impuros vivebant." Rosenmuller, In Act., vi. 1.

[11] "In the daily ministration," that is, in the division of the contributions which the more prosperous converts were making to the common funds. It was the only possible subject of discussion in such a community.

amongst the believers, was succeeded by a more perilous struggle against the Jews at large.

Arraigned before the Jewish authorities on a charge of blasphemy, Stephen answered with unwonted courage. After contradicting the common assertions concerning the piety of his race and the immutability of their law, he broke out more openly, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost! As your fathers did, so do ye! They have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have now been the betrayers and the murderers..... Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing by the right hand of God."[12] The vision of Stephen illumined his death. Stoned by those whom he had denounced, the martyr prayed that the sin of his murder might not be laid to their charge.[13] The same voice that had pleaded for deliverance from the Jewish law was raised to the last in obedience to the law of love.

The liberty of the Christian could not have been more nobly, more successfully asserted. St. Stephen had proved himself free to speak against his persecutors. He had proved himself free in a far higher sense, by praying that they might be forgiven. This was the true liberty of the Christian, of the martyr.

So entirely had the terrors of martyrdom been surmounted, that they who survived St. Stephen spoke of him as falling asleep. They themselves,

[12] Acts, VII. 51–56.

[13] "Who saw his Master in the sky,
And called on Him to save.
Like Him, with pardon on his tongue,
In midst of mortal pain,
He prayed for them that did the wrong!"
HEBER.

instantly assailed, were scattered amongst all the neighboring districts, whither many of those converted at an earlier time must have previously returned. The class of which St. Stephen had been the champion multiplied until its numbers far exceeded those of the native Jewish converts. Samaria,[14] Damascus,[15] Phœnicia,[16] Cyprus,[17] and Antioch,[18] must each have contained almost as many believers as Jerusalem. The glory of the single city was failing. The glory of the single race was failing likewise. Cornelius, "one of another nation," "a centurion of the band called the Italian," heard St. Peter declare at Cæsarea, that "in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him."[19] The Apostles and brethren at Jerusalem were indignant at learning that St. Peter had baptized Cornelius and his friends, who, though probably Jewish proselytes,[20] were, as Gentiles or Heathen, accounted unfit to be admitted amongst the Jewish converts. But after hearing the statement of St. Peter concerning the transaction, his associates were ready to allow that "then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."[21]

Meanwhile the Apostles had been joined by one especially appointed to carry on the work of deliverance. The most conspicuous amongst the witnesses, if not the perpetrators of St. Stephen's

[14] Acts, VIII. 5.
[15] Ib., IX 2.
[16] Ib., XI. 19.
[17] Ib, ib.
[18] Ib, ib.
[19] Ib., X. 35.
[20] But not circumcised. Acts, XI., 3.
[21] Ib., XI. 18.

murder returned from a journey in quest of fresh victims to claim his place as an Apostle.[22] Both as a foreign Jew and as a Roman citizen,[23] St. Paul was likely to be less dependent upon the Jewish law and the narrow liberty which it upheld. So boldly did he declare himself at Jerusalem, that he was obliged to fly thence for his life.[24] He took refuge at Antioch, where "the disciples were called Christians first."[25]

St. Paul, it may be believed, had much to do with the assumption of the name. Assumed it must have been. It could not have been given. The Heathen were too indifferent, not to speak of their being too ignorant in relation to the converts, to think of calling them Christians. Such an epithet could never have come from the Jews, whose denial of Jesus as the Christ implied their rejection of His followers as Christians. The name was adopted by the believers themselves. The effect of its adoption must have been instantaneous. No longer was the Jewish law in force. No longer was the Jewish liberty in estimation. The Christians had a liberty of their own. They had a law of their own.

Various were the causes at work to shake the adherence of the Christians to the institutions of their Jewish ancestors. One of the Apostles, St. James the Elder, the brother of St. John, was

[22] "Ex persecutore Apostolus." August., Serm. 175.

[23] Having been born at Tarsus, which Pliny (Nat. Hist., v. 22) calls "liberam urbem."

[24] Acts, ix. 29, 30.

[25] Acts, xi. 26; Euseb., Hist. Eccl., ii. 3.

seized by the orders of Herod Agrippa, then reigning at Jerusalem. The object of the prince, as we are expressly informed, was to gratify the Jews, whose hostility to the Christians had been but increased by the growing independence of the latter. If the Jews were incensed, the Christians were strengthened by their new relations. A touching account is preserved in the earliest ecclesiastical history concerning the firmness of St. James, and the impression which he produced upon the officer sent to arrest him. "Seeing him make his confession before the tribunal," says the narrator, "the man was moved so as to confess himself also a Christian." As both were led away to execution, the new convert besought forgiveness of the Apostle, who, kissing his penitent companion, replied, "Peace be with thee!"[26] The arrest of St. Peter followed close upon that of St. James. But the second victim to the wrath of the Jews escaped death. The impression, however, remained with him and with his brethren, that they could no longer depend upon the Jewish law.

The next year witnessed not only the declaration, but the exercise of independence. In company with St. Barnabas, the first to believe "that he was a disciple," St. Paul set out for Antioch. Touching at the island of Cyprus, where he obtained a convert in the Roman Proconsul,[27] the Apostle went on to the southern provinces of Asia Minor. There he

[26] About A. D. 43. Clem., ap. Eus., II. 9.

[27] "The deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus." Acts, XIII. 7, 12.

"opened the door of faith" to the Heathen.[28] Hitherto the condition of receiving such converts had been their promise or their proof of obedience to the Jewish law. St. Paul demanded of the Heathen in Asia neither the proof nor the promise of faith in any other law besides "the word of the Lord." This was ten years after his conversion, and therefore about twelve years after the Ascension of the Saviour.

Six or seven years later, the Church at Antioch, to which St. Paul had then returned, was visited by "certain men from Judea." They came to denounce the neglect of the Jewish rites on the part of many Antioch Christians. Nor were there wanting indications that the visitors had brought their charges at the instigation of the elder Apostles.[29] To these, therefore, it was determined to address an appeal, which St. Paul and St. Barnabas were selected to bear to Jerusalem.

Time enough had passed since the return of St. Paul to Antioch for him to have made many conversions amongst the Heathen. But it is doubtful whether, in that city, he ventured to receive any converts who were not in some degree proselytes to the Jewish faith. At all events, the complaint from Jerusalem had no reference to such converts as had been made in Asia Minor. Nor did St. Paul, in answering the complainants, refer to aught besides the exemption of some amongst the converts at Antioch from the initiatory obligations under the Jewish

[28] Acts, xiii. 44 - 49. [29] Ib., xv. 1, 24.

law. This intelligence, of itself, was more than the Jewish Christians could brook. "Certain," as they are described, "of the sect of the Pharisees which believed," rose up immediately to say that "it was needful to circumcise" the converts at Antioch, "and to command them to keep the law of Moses." It was found necessary to hold a more private deliberation, to which "the Apostles and Elders" alone were called. Even in this more sedate and more liberal presence,[30] the cause of the Church at Antioch was for some time argued in vain.

At last St. Peter, true to the impulses of a generous heart, rose up to plead for deliverance. Reminding his hearers of the Heathen conversions wrought in their own neighborhood, he went on to ask them why they would "put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither their fathers nor they were able to bear." Then, and seemingly at his request, St. Paul and St. Barnabas repeated their statement concerning the transactions in which they had been the actors, adding, apparently, the information which they had before withheld concerning their Heathen converts in Asia Minor.[31] It may have struck the Apostles more forcibly that they were bound to be liberal to the converts who had been received from the partial proselytes to the ancient faith, now that they heard of others who had been

[30] Clement of Alexandria (Strom., IV. 15) says all the Apostles were present.

[31] "I communicated unto them," says St. Paul himself, (Gal., II. 2) "that Gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to them which were of reputation, lest by any means I should run, or had run, in vain."

admitted without having been proselytes at all. But to these the appeal from Antioch did not relate. Nor could any decision in reference to the Antioch converts determine the new question that had been opened by the accounts of St. Paul. The spirit of love descended into the midst of the Apostles. They determined, according to the advice of St. James the Younger, "not to trouble them which from among the Gentiles," referring to the partial proselytes, "are turned to God."[32] With regard to the other class of converts from the Heathen, it was still more liberally resolved to give "the right hand of fellowship" to St. Barnabas and St. Paul, with the understanding that they should "go unto the Heathen," while the elder Apostles continued their labors amongst their countrymen. "Only they would," concludes the earnest relation of St. Paul, "that we should remember the poor; the same which I," he says, "was forward to do."[33]

A momentary interruption to the deliverance of the Christians occurred at Antioch. Not long after the decision of the Apostles had been received there with great rejoicing, St. Peter came thither, and immediately entered into close relation with the converts whose free admission he had advocated. But on the subsequent arrival of some other Christians from Jerusalem, he withdrew from his new associates, "fearing," as St. Paul affirms, "them which were

[32] "But that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood." Acts, xv. 19, 20, 28, 29. See Norton on the Genuineness of the Gospels, II. pp. 137–139, and Barrington, Misc. Sacra, Essay IV.

[33] Gal., II. 9, 10

of the circumcision." The other Jewish converts imitated his example; and so general was the tergiversation, that St. Barnabas himself, the chosen companion of St. Paul, was "carried away." St. Paul alone stood firm. "Why compellest thou," he appealed to St. Peter in public, "why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews, ... knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ?"[34] To such words as these there could be no reply. The truth was declared beyond all dispute, that the law of love was independent of the Jewish law. The deliverance begun by the Saviour was at last embraced by His disciples.

Deliverance from the Jewish law did not involve its renunciation. The ordinances, like the associations of old continued to be mingled with the commandments and the promises according to which the Christians shaped their lives. St. Paul himself, aged and worn with acts of violence on the part of the Jews, journeyed back to Jerusalem to offer his vows in the temple according to the ancient institutions.[35] The other Apostles were naturally still more reluctant to separate themselves from the communion of their countrymen. Yet with them all, and with almost all their followers, it was acknowledged that the statutes of the Jewish race were but the preparation of the institutions established for the generations and the races yet to appear.

St. James the Younger, the head of the Church

[34] Gal., II. 14–17.

[35] Acts, XXI. 17 *et seq.*

at Jerusalem, was, perhaps on that account, styled the brother of the Lord.[36] His epistle is addressed to "the Twelve Tribes," that is, to the Jewish Christians, "scattered abroad." Though writing to them, and from Jerusalem, St. James lays no stress upon the authority of the Jewish law, or upon the prominence of the Jewish converts to the Christian law. Instead of recalling the visions of dominion entertained by his race, he dwells with peculiar unction upon the virtues of "the poor," as well as upon the duties of those whom he is addressing towards "the fatherless and widows in their affliction." "So speak ye," he urges, "and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. . . . . Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: but the rich in that he is laid low. . . . . We count them happy which endure."[37] Every word like these rose up as a barrier to shut off the mistaken expectations in which the Jewish converts shared as well as their unconverted countrymen. Had either class obtained their desire, another series of wars and oppressions would have begun with the attempt of the Jews to liberate themselves in order to rule over the other nations of the earth.

A few years passed; and St. James the Younger, like the Elder James, fell before the passions of his countrymen. Enraged at the escape of St. Paul, in consequence of his being able to plead the privilege still attached to Roman citizenship, the Jewish rulers

[36] Hegesippus, ap. Eus., II. 23. See Proleg. in Ep. Jac., Nov. Test. Koppian.

[37] S. James, II. 12, I. 9, v. 11.

seized upon St. James at the time of the Passover. Demanding his renunciation of the Christian faith, now much more than ever opposed to their ideas of liberty, they urged him to restrain the people from believing in such a Messiah as "Jesus the crucified." Placed in a wing of the temple where he could be seen and heard by the multitude then gathered in the city to keep the solemn festival, St. James did not hesitate to bear witness to the truth. "Why ask ye me," he cried, "concerning Jesus, the Son of God? He sits in Heaven, on the right of the Great Power; and He will come hereafter upon the clouds." At this, the Apostle was cast down, stoned, and beaten on the head with a club until he died, says the narrator of his fate, "a martyr."[38]

Yet there were Christians who still clung to their earlier principles as Jews. For such the times were dark. Some forsook "the assembling of themselves together."[39] Others "drew back" so far as to preserve nothing of their faith in Christ "but a certain fearful looking-for of judgment."[40] But it was impossible for the stanchest Jew amongst the Christians to hold much longer to the ancient law. Not more than two or three years after the martyrdom of St. James, the Christians fled together from Jerusalem, whither were advancing the relentless and irresistible armies of the Roman Empire.

The flight from Jerusalem was the final movement

[38] About A. D. 63. Heges., ap. Eus., II. 23. Josephus, Ant., xx. 9, 1.

[39] Hebrews, x. 25.

[40] Ib., x. 27.

in the work of deliverance from the Jewish law.[41] Not, indeed, that we are to conceive of the law as having thenceforth lost its influence over the believers in the law of love. Sign upon sign to the contrary will appear hereafter. But there could be no future claims, none, at least, in which a resolute Christian could believe, on the part of the law to the Divine authority which it had asserted of yore. It was but the law of men, and of men who had been doomed to overthrow. No more would it vindicate a liberty consisting in the right to insurrection or to domination. The liberty of rulers once supported by it had been condemned.

All the serener was the liberty of the subject. The passions of race and of clime, dividing land from land and man from man, subsided. Where they had raged, the calm of human brotherhood, reflecting the Divine Providence, prevailed. Not the ruler only, but the subject even more than the ruler, could now be invested with the liberty appointed by the law of love.[42]

[41] A D. 66. *Τῷ γὰρ ἐκείνων παραπτώματι ἡ σωτηρία τοῖς ἔθνεσι γεγένηται.* "And with the overthrow of the Jews, the salvation of the Heathen was assured." Origen, Cont. Cels., II. 78.

[42] "So now," writes Nedham on the Excellencie of a Free State, "the pale should be broken down, and all nations taken into the church." P. 93, ed. 1767.

CHAPTER IV.

DELIVERANCE FROM THE HEATHEN LAW.

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. . . . . For the former things are passed away." REVELATION, xxi. 3, 4.

THE Heathen law, generally speaking, made no pretension to a divine origin. It was believed, indeed, to have been framed under the favor of the ancient deities. But it contained the statutes of men. Such ordinances as were supposed, amongst the more western nations, to descend from the gods, depended for support upon human enactments.

As a human law, the law of the Heathen upheld liberty in its ancient form. The many were regarded as being bound to serve. The few holding dominion were alone considered as entitled or as attaining to liberty. These few were continually growing fewer. Only one or two classes, sometimes only one or two individuals in each nation could retain their hold upon dominion. Only the same small number, therefore, could retain their hold upon liberty.

More reduced than ever had the proportion of the

few to the many become in the Empire of Rome. In this most of the ancient nations had been absorbed, while the victorious Romans themselves had yielded to their master. He, in his turn, stooped to those amongst his subjects whom he could not but fear. It was an atmosphere congenial to the liberty allowed by the Heathen law. Yet there were always some amongst both the Romans and their inferiors who essayed to breathe more freely. Liberty to the Romans was the freedom of returning to their former government. To the provincials it was the freedom of regaining their ancient institutions. With all, the recovery of liberty was regarded as the recovery of dominion, of the liberty tolerated by the Roman as by the Heathen law, but confined by the former to fewer than it would have been by the latter alone.

The Apostles were amongst the subjects of Rome. As such they had cherished the expectation of being liberated under the law of their ancestors. How their expectation was subdued has been described. Delivered from the Jewish law, they met the Heathen. But this could exert no such influence upon them as their own law had done. They had been taught as Jews to consider themselves free from the Heathen law at large. From the Roman part of it, in other words, from the imperial yoke, they had anticipated, as Jews, to be set free. What they thus felt as Jews, they would feel still more earnestly as Christians. It could not be that the Roman yoke would continue to oppress them. It could not be that the

Heathen law would become binding upon them. All that it seemed necessary to do, was to achieve the deliverance of others, not yet Christians, not yet even Jews, from the Heathen law.[1]

St. Paul began the sacred work. Rejected by the Jews to whom he first appealed at Antioch in Pisidia, he did not lose heart. "It was necessary," he said, "that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." But so few or so feeble were the converts whom he made amongst the Heathen, that they were unable to protect him against the Jews, who, "stirring up the chief men of the city," obtained the expulsion of St. Paul and his companion, St. Barnabas.[2] A miracle wrought by the Apostle at Lystra brought out the inhabitants with a priest at their head to offer sacrifice to the strangers, whom they at once imagined to be gods.[3] Such homage augured as ill as the persecution at Antioch concerning the success of the enterprise that had been undertaken.

Soon after his return, St. Paul set out upon a second journey. Passing through Syria and Asia Minor, he came to Philippi, in Macedonia. There occurred the first definite act, on his part, of opposition to the Heathen law. A female slave, "which brought

[1] Ὡς ἀπεστάλησαν ὑπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ διδάξαι πάντας, "Even as they been sent by Christ to teach all men." Justin Martyr, Apol., I. 39.

[2] Acts, XIII. 14 *et seq.*

[3] Ib., XIV. 8 *et seq.*

her master much gain by soothsaying," was induced by the Apostle to abandon her art, notwithstanding its repute amongst the Heathen. St. Paul and his companion were immediately arraigned before the Roman magistrates on the charge of teaching "customs" which it was not lawful for Romans to receive. The two were put in prison until the following morning, when they were liberated.[4]

From Philippi St. Paul proceeded to Athens. Here, where the Heathen law was most venerated, the Apostle resolved to make known his purposes as a preacher of the Christian law. Seizing upon an opportunity offered to him by the inquiries of "certain philosophers," at whose request he appears to have been allowed to speak before the ancient tribunal of the Areopagus, St. Paul delivered his well known discourse to the "men of Athens." Whom they ignorantly worshipped as the Unknown God, Him the Apostle declared to be the "Lord of Heaven and earth." His will it was that men "should seek" Him, "if haply they might feel after Him and find Him." To this end, One had been ordained to "judge the world in righteousness. . . . . Whereof He hath given assurance to all in that He hath raised Him from the dead." The Author of the new law being thus revealed, St. Paul proceeded to reveal the law itself. "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood, all nations of men, ... and now com-

[4] Acts, xvi. 16 *et seq.*

mandeth all men everywhere to repent." The common obligations, the common privileges of mankind could not in so few words have been more distinctly proclaimed. One of the very council before which the Apostle had spoken "clave unto him and believed."[5]

But there were too many supports to the Heathen law to be at once shaken down. Some time after the discourse to the Athenians, and while the Apostle was residing at Ephesus, "no small stir" arose against him. Demetrius, "a silversmith which made silver shrines for Diana," became alarmed by the departure of many from the faith whereon his craft depended. Accordingly, he excited not only his fellow-smiths, but his fellow-townsmen generally, to rally to the cause of "the great goddess Diana." "The whole city," says the sacred narrative, "was filled with confusion." Of course, the Christians were in great danger. St. Paul, had he not been prevented by "the disciples" from going forth amongst the multitude, might have been sacrificed to the fury that had been aroused. Two of his companions, dragged into the public theatre, were in peril of their lives, until one of the magistrates took it upon himself to allay the uproar. He urged the impossibility of speaking against what was considered holy at Ephesus, as the reason for releasing the Christians, and, furthermore, for ceasing to be apprehensive about their conversions.[6] So strong seemed the old law, so numerous were its votaries,

[5] Acts, xvii. 22 – 34.

[6] Ib., xix. 23 *et seq.*

that they could look down without concern upon the few who had embraced the new law.

A third journey of St. Paul was directed to the countries visited on his second. Arrested at Jerusalem, he was transported at his own demand to Rome, whence, on being released, he appears to have gone on further journeys, westward as well as eastward. The same encounters that had marked the earlier, undoubtedly marked the later journeys of the Apostle. We cannot trace his steps. But we can conceive his exertions. We can catch glimpses of his trials. We can catch sounds of his earnest, unwearied, undaunted appeals.

However multiplied, however extended his wanderings, he never swerved from his single design as the deliverer of the Heathen. "I am the least of the Apostles," he said, "that am not meet to be called an Apostle."[7] Yet he could add, "Inasmuch as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."[8] He might well do so. In delivering the Heathen, he was delivering the whole human race from the law that had crushed antiquity.[9] This deliverance was, to use his own words, "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."[10] To show forth this liberty and the manner in which it might be acquired, St. Paul undeviatingly labored.

[7] I. Cor., xv. 9.

[8] Rom., xi. 13.

[9] Τὴν οἰκουμένην φωτίσας, "Enlightening the universe," says Chrysostom, De Laud. S. Paul., Hom. iv.

"Paulus præco Dei qui fera gentium
Primus corda sacro perdomuit stylo"

Prudent., *Præf. Lib.* i. *Cont. Symmachum.*

[10] Rom., viii. 21.

He taught his converts, in the first place, to renounce all thoughts of gaining the new liberty by the same means which had been employed to gain the old. "Be subject," he wrote to the Roman believers, "unto the higher powers."[11] "Put them," he charged Titus, his "own son after the faith," — "put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates."[12] "We wrestle not," he reminded the Ephesian Christians, "against flesh and blood, but against . . . . spiritual wickedness."[13] Instead of casting off authority, the Christian was directed to submit to it with even greater obedience than the Heathen. "Ye must needs be subject," the Romans are informed, "not only for wrath," that is, the fear of the wrath excited by disobedience, "but also for conscience sake. . . . . For there is no power but of God."[14]

Other means, besides sedition or violence, were pointed out to those desirous of being free. "I say through the grace given unto me," wrote St. Paul to the Romans, "to every man among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.[15] . . . . . Be not high-minded, but fear." This humility was the first necessity of the Heathen.

But it was not to prevent the believer from recognising his powers, or from employing them in the cause which he embraced. "Set your affections

[11] Rom., XIII. 1.
[12] Tit., III. 1.
[13] Ephes., VI. 12.
[14] Rom., XIII. 1, 6.
[15] Ib., XII. 3, XI. 20.

on things above," the Colossians are urged. "Put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy..... Seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." [16] This regeneration of the believer was his second, and his chief necessity. "The natural man," the Corinthians were told, "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." [17] Once humbled, he might be regenerated. Once regenerated, he would be liberated.

Thus was gained "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." [18] It was the right of the believer. "He that is spiritual," wrote St. Paul, "judgeth all things." It was also the possession of the believer. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is," declared the Apostle, "there is liberty." [19] This was the liberty to "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." [20] This was the liberty to "do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." [21]

No one could have laid greater stress upon the union that might be established with this liberty. "For there is no difference," writes St. Paul to the Romans, "between the Jew and Greek." [22] "There is neither Greek nor Jew," he repeats to the Colossians, "circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in

[16] Col., III. 2, 8-10.
[17] I. Cor., II. 14.
[18] Gal., v. 1.
[19] I. Cor., II. 15. II. Cor., III. 17.
[20] Titus, II. 10.
[21] Col., III. 17.
[22] Rom., x. 12.

all. Put on therefore . . . . above all these things, charity, which is the bond of perfectness."[23] "We," he reiterates to the Romans, "being many, are one body in Christ."[24] The centralization sanctioned by the Heathen law had no place under the law of love.

The views inculcated by St. Paul in relation to the existing divisions amongst men are peculiarly illustrated in his epistle to Philemon. This was an early and a zealous convert, residing at Colossæ in Phrygia, between whom and the Apostle relations of the utmost confidence had been formed.[25] During St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, he met with a slave, by name Onesimus, belonging to his friend at Colossæ. The character of the slave was bad, and his presence at Rome implied his dismissal or his escape from his master's service. But the Apostle, true to his own doctrine, accepted and encouraged the penitence of the bondman. "My son Onesimus," he styles him, with an affection unmindful of any distinctions of society, "whom I have begotten in my bonds." Either recalled by his master, or determined of his own accord to make amends for his offences by returning voluntarily to Colossæ, Onesimus was made the bearer of a letter to Philemon, written by St. Paul "with his own hand." Urging his friend to receive the repentant slave, "not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved," the Apostle takes to his "own

[23] Col., III. 11, 12, 14.
[24] Rom., XII. 5. I. Cor., XII 20.
[25] "Our dearly beloved and fellow laborer. . . . We have great joy and consolation in thy love." Philem., 1, 7.

account" whatever might be owing to the master for the past. "Having confidence," he adds, "in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say."[26]

St. Paul acted up to what he thus enjoined. If humility led to deliverance from the Heathen law, then was he delivered. He confessed himself "less than the least of all the saints."[27] Of "sinners," he declared, "I am chief."[28] If regeneration again, following humility, could liberate men, then was St. Paul liberated. "I obtained mercy," he said.[29] "For God," he added, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts."[30] "Not," he continued, "as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after."[31] Thus he attained to the "liberty . . . . in Christ Jesus."[32] "For the law of the Spirit of life," he averred, "hath made me free from the law of sin and death."[33] Not to such an one could liberty appear to imply dominion. "Though I preach the Gospel," he acknowledged, "I have nothing to glory of. . . . . Though I be free from all, yet have I made myself servant unto all."[34] "I have coveted," he truly professed, "no man's silver or gold or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves," the elders of Ephesus, "know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities."[35] He claimed no exemption from

[26] Philem., 10-21. A contrast has been drawn between the Epistle to Philemon and some letters of Pliny the Younger, IX. 21, 24.
[27] Ephes., III. 8.
[28] I. Tim., I. 15.
[29] Ib., I. 16
[30] II. Cor., IV. 6.
[31] Phil., III. 12.
[32] Gal., II. 4.
[33] Rom., VIII. 2.
[34] I. Cor., IX. 16, 19
[35] Acts, XX. 33, 34. See, also I. Thess., II. 9, II. Thess., III. 8

the labors and the sufferings in which the Christians were outwardly involved. "I take pleasure," he insisted, "in infirmities and in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake."[36] By words like these and by actions corresponding to them, St. Paul gave proof of his own deliverance from the Heathen law.

St. Paul was not alone in laboring amongst the Heathen. The enthusiasm of his spirit was soon communicated to the elder Apostles and their companions. The first Epistle bearing the name of St. Peter is a memorial of his exertions to set the Heathen converts free from their ancient law. Addressed to the "strangers scattered throughout" Asia Minor, the letter impresses upon their minds the same points which St. Paul had repeatedly urged. "Pass the time," says St. Peter, "of your sojourning in fear, ... being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, ... as free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. . . . . Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren. . . . . And above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves."[37] The majesty of the Heathen law faded before the injunctions of the Apostle.

Meanwhile, St. John was following up the work of deliverance in Asia Minor. Alexandria was visited by St. Mark.[38] St. Thomas preached through

[36] II. Cor., XII. 10.
[37] I. Pet, I. 17, 23, II. 16, III. 8, IV. 8.
[38] Eus., II. 16.

the East. St. Andrew turned his steps towards the North.[39] The other Apostles, yet surviving, could not have been idle. But the record of their exertions is obliterated. There remains a bare tradition that most of them suffered martyrdom.[40]

The day of reaction was as sure to arrive amongst the Heathen as amongst the Jews. "The time is come," exclaimed St. Peter, "that judgment must begin at the house of God. . . . . The end of all things is at hand." Yet that they might prove their deliverance from the law which claimed their bodies as its victims, the converts were bidden to "rejoice, inasmuch," concludes the Apostle, "as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings."[41] "If we suffer," the voice of St. Paul is heard to say, "we shall also reign with Him."[42] "I am ready," he adds for himself, "to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."[43] Both St. Paul and St. Peter are numbered amongst the martyrs of a persecution excited against the foreign sectaries of Rome.[44] The death of such leaders as these would have annihilated any other cause. It did but strengthen the cause of the Christians.

Their deliverance from the Heathen law was not completed. But it was begun. Whatever attach-

[39] Origen, ap. Eus., III. 1.

[40] Heracleon, ap Clem. Alex., Strom, IV. 9, p. 595, ed. Potter.

[41] I. Pet., IV. 7, 12, 17.

[42] II. Tim., II 12.

[43] Ib., IV. 6.

[44] Clem. Rom., Ad Corinth., 5. Dionys, ap. Eus., II. 25 Origen, ap. Eus., III. 1. Ambrose (Serm. Contra Auxent., p. 867, tom II. ed. Benedict.) relates the tradition of St. Peter's meeting with Christ at the gate of Rome. On the supposed spread of the persecution, see Orosius, Hist., VII. 7; or Belouino, Hist. Gén. des Persécutions de l'Église, tom I. pp. 117 *et seq.*, 138 *et seq.*

ment, whatever awe had been preserved for the law of elder days, was overwhelmed amidst the havoc wrought by its votaries. The same was the loss of awe and of attachment on the part of the Christians towards the liberty of elder days. They had learned the value of their own liberty. It would not as yet prevail amongst others. But amongst themselves it was established. The liberty of the subject increased with the deliverance of the Christians from the Heathen law.

CHAPTER V.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES.

"There is a plan of things beforehand laid out, which, from the nature of it, requires various systems of means, as well as length of time, in order to the carrying on its several parts into execution."

BUTLER, *Analogy of Religion*, Part II. ch. 4.

THE seed was sown. It had not yet ripened. Not yet, indeed, was it fenced about with the protection which it needed in order to reach its maturity. The law of love had its Divine defence. It needed human defences likewise. It required to be supported by the statutes, the offices, the exertions of men.

This the Saviour had foreshown. He had not contented himself with giving the law. He had declared its ministers, its institutions, its operations. He created Apostles. He "appointed other seventy also."[1] To his followers as a body, He applied the name of the Church.[2] The sacraments of Baptism[3] and of Communion[4] were ordained. "There shall be one fold," was the promise, "and one Shepherd."[5]

[1] S. Luke, x. 1.
[2] S. Matt., XVI. 18.
[3] Ib., XXVIII. 19. S. Mark, XVI. 16.
[4] S. Matt., XXVI. 26-28. S. John, VI. 53-57.
[5] S. John, X. 16.

The outlines thus prepared were filled in by the Apostles. They were the heads of the communities already formed, the founders as well as the heads of those soon established. At the outset they found it necessary to supply a vacancy in their own number. St. Peter informed the disciples, "men and brethren," "that one must be ordained." They then "appointed two, ... and they prayed, ... and they gave forth their lots."[6] St. Paul was afterwards added to the holy band. While they lived, they were the rulers of the Christians. Wherever a community was gathered, it was under the superintendence of the Apostles; more especially, indeed, under that of the particular Apostle by whom it had been gathered, but not the less under all the Apostles.

When they were removed, their places were taken, so far as was possible, by the Bishops whom they had ordained. The title, otherwise rendered Overseers, belonging to the Bishops, fully explains their office. There has long been, as there long may be, a difference of opinion with regard to the time at which the office was created, and the numbers of those by whom it was held. These are questions, however, admitting a simple if not a universally acceptable solution. In the days of the Apostles, the title of Bishop was not always distinguished from that of Presbyter.[7] The latter

[6] Acts, I 15 *et seq.*

[7] "To all the Saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons." Phil., I. 1. So I. Tim., III. 1, 8; Tit., I. 5, 7. "Apud veteres iidem Episcopi et Presbyteri." Hieronymus, Ep. 82, tom. II., pars ii., p. 648, ed.

formed a body of rulers in each community; of this body the Bishop was the chief. There could be but one chief, though there might be many members of the ruling order. Yet of this the chief himself was but a member, the superior member, indeed, yet still a member. It was only natural that he should be confounded with the rest, or that the rest should be confounded with him, more particularly while the Apostles continued in the exercise of their supremacy. What was a Bishop in those days that he should be called an Overseer? Were not the Apostles the Overseers? Nor until they departed, could the Bishops, as their successors, assume the posts then vacated. The office of the Bishop had long before been instituted. But it did not attain to its inherent importance until the death of the Apostles. When they ceased to oversee, the Bishops became the Overseers, each of his own community.

The mention of Presbyters, or Elders, first occurs in relation to the Church at Jerusalem.[8] Some time afterwards, when St. Paul and St. Barnabas were upon their journey to Asia Minor, they "ordained Elders in every Church."[9] These, constituting the council, as it were, of the Bishop, would share his duties, and, to a certain degree, his prerogatives.

Both the Bishop and the Presbyters would be assisted by the Deacons, or Ministers. St. Paul uses

Mart. So, it is said, were the Bishops and the Deacons confounded. Chrys., In Ep. ad Phil., I.

[8] Acts, XI. 30.

[9] Ib., XIV. 23.

the name in writing to the church at Philippi.[10] But the office had long existed. When the dispute arose in which St. Stephen appeared, "the twelve called the multitude of the disciples, and said, Look ye out among you seven men . . . . whom we may appoint. . . . . And they chose . . . . whom they set before the Apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them."[11] The charge[12] assigned to the seven thus appointed makes it apparent that they were such as subsequently, if not already, went by the title of Deacons.[13]

So simple were the forms of government in the Christian communities. Their other forms, whether of admission or service, were equally simple.[14] When Philip met the Egyptian proselyte, and heard him reading from the Jewish Scriptures, he asked no more than a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as the condition of administering baptism. Nor, when the touching rite had been performed beside the highway, did Philip instruct his convert that there were any other ceremonies to be observed by him.[15] The newly admitted believer would accompany his brethren to the upper rooms, where the

[10] Phil., I. 1.

[11] Acts, VI. 2, 3, 5, 6.

[12] To "serve tables," and "in the daily ministration." Ib., VI. 1, 2.

[13] Vitringa's work, De Synagoga Vetere, (of which I have principally used Bernard's compendium, The Synagogue and The Church,) describes the functionaries in the synagogue corresponding to the Presbyters and Deacons. See the Comp., ch. 1, 3, 6, 8

[14] The simplicity of the early organization is well described by Planck, Gesch. Christlich-Kirchl. Gesellschafts-Verfassung, tom I. pp. 24–50. Cf. the argument in Brokesby's Gov't of the Primitive Church, ch. 1–5.

[15] Acts, VIII. 27–39.

service consisted of the prayer, the psalm, the lesson from the Scripture, the occasional discourse, and the occasional celebration of the sacraments, the Communion being accompanied by the Agape, or Festival of Love.[16] In all these services there was little or no distinction between those who officiated and those who formed the congregation. If the usual ritual was interrupted by sentences of penance or of expulsion, the attitude of the Deacon, of the Presbyter, especially of the Bishop, would become more commanding. But in all the common observances, the members of the communities participated on nearly equal terms. "All taught," says an Early Christian, "and all baptized."[17]

The authority actually established was to be committed only to suitable hands. "The Deacons," according to St. Paul, were to be "grave." "Let these also," he says, "first be proved; then let them use the office of a Deacon, being found blameless."[18] "A Bishop," writes the Apostle, "must be blameless as the steward of God."[19] Nor was the previous fitness of the superior the only safeguard of the inferior. The higher the station, the greater was its responsibility in the communities of the Christians. "Be thou an example," writes St. Paul

[16] Ἀγάπαι, "Feasts of Charity," Jude, 12. On these, see a memoir, Sur les Antiquités Chrétiennes, by Raoul-Rochette, Acad. des Inscriptions, tom. XIII. pp. 92 *et seq.*, Nouv. Série.

[17] "Primum enim omnes docebant et omnes baptizabant. . . . Ut ergo cresceret plebs et multiplicaretur, omnibus inter initia concessum est et evangelizare, et baptizare, et Scripturas in ecclesia explanare." Hilar. Diaconus, In Ep. ad Ephes., IV. 12, ap. Ambros. Opera, tom. II. p. 241, ed. Bened.

[18] I. Tim., III. 8, 10.

[19] Tit., I. 7. So I. Tim., III. 2.

to one whom he had left in charge of the Ephesians, "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. . . . . Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine. Continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." [20] "Feed the flock," is St. Peter's command to the Elders of Asia Minor, "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly, ... neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." [21] The Apostles confessed themselves subject to the same responsibilities. "For I think," declares St. Paul, "that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed unto death. For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." [22]

Not for this were the superiors to be disregarded. On the contrary, the necessity of respect for them was urged with all the greater earnestness. "Are all Apostles?" asks St. Paul. "Are all prophets? Are all teachers?" [23] "Obey them," is the direction to the Hebrews, "that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves." [24] "Let the Elders," is the injunction to Timothy, "that rule well, be counted worthy of double honor." [25] "For, brethren," the Galatians are told, "ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but

[20] I. Tim., IV. 12, 16.
[21] I. Pet., v. 2, 3.
[22] I. Cor., IV. 9.
[23] Ib., XII. 29.
[24] Heb., XIII. 17.
[25] I. Tim., v. 17.

by love serve one another." [26] Instead of going without restraint, in consequence of the moderate authority entrusted to their rulers, the members of the communities were bound to obedience, the greater in that it was made in love.

On all alike the principle of individual accountability was imposed. "Wherefore, my beloved," writes St. Paul to one of his communities, "as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." [27] The duty of every believer to himself was the security of the superior. It protected him from the passions of his inferior. The same duty was the security of the inferior. It protected him against the passions of his superior. For the duty to one's self could not be discharged but by discharging the duty to one's fellow-men. "Not many wise men after the flesh," as St. Paul wrote, "not many noble" [28] had been converted. There were but few, consequently, whose associations would resist the principles of the Christian communities. Such as were of superior rank were warned against abusing their superiority. "Ye masters, ... forbear threatening, knowing that your Master also is in Heaven." But the inferior was equally bound not to abuse his inferiority. "Be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh," and it is added, "with fear and trembling, ... but as the servants of Christ, ... doing service as to the Lord, and not to men." [29]

[26] Gal., v. 13.
[27] Phil., II. 12.
[28] I. Cor., I. 26.
[29] Ephes., VI. 5-9.

So the child was commanded: — "Obey your parents in the Lord." But there was a command for the parents: — "And ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."[30] So with women: — "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." The commandment followed, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church."[31] Woman received peculiar protection. She was called to peculiar exertion. St. Paul writes to his "dearly beloved son," Timothy, of "the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois and thy mother Eunice."[32] The writer of the Book of Acts alludes to the instruction given by Eunice to her son, in terms which prove the influence of the Christian mother to have been comprehended.[33] Nor was the sphere of woman confined to her own household. She was the "servant of the Church," "the beloved . . . . which labored much in the Lord."[34]

The obligations of the individual to himself and to those around him rested upon his higher obligations to the Deity. "For it is God," says St. Paul, "which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."[35] The responsibility of each man to God was the keystone of every Christian community.

[30] Ephes., VI. 1 – 4.
[31] Ib., V. 22, 25.
[32] II. Tim., I. 5.
[33] Acts, XVI. 1. On the Christian women of the period, see the XVIIth chapter of Bishop Mant's Primitive Christianity.
[34] Rom., XVI. 1, 12. Women were forbidden, however, to "speak" or to "teach." I. Cor., XIV. 34. I. Tim., II. 12
[35] Phil., II., 13.

The contrast of the society thus established to that established by Heathen rule must arrest the attention. To what god of theirs could the Heathen confess their individual accountability? In what state of theirs could they consult the interests of one another or of themselves? Was not every man annihilated, as it were, in the state? Were not his duties those which he could discharge to it, to its masters, to any rather than his neighbors or himself? Were not the very deities dependent upon the state acknowledging and worshipping them? The Christian communities were constructed upon very different rules. Their members looked up to a God to whom they could believe themselves accountable. They looked round upon men towards whom they could believe that they had obligations to fulfil. They beheld themselves, and they could believe that they had duties to themselves. The individual was rescued from his overwhelming depression beneath the laws of man. He was raised to the place assigned him by the law of God.

Thus it was that the law of love was upheld by human institutions. The work of the Early Christians was begun. It had been appointed to them to abandon the centralization of the past. It had been appointed to them to prepare the union of the future. This preparation was commenced by them in the principles and the institutions of their communities.

There would still be trials to shake the union thus prepared. What some of these would be, ap-

pears in a scene at Corinth, described by Clement of Rome, the disciple of both St. Peter and St. Paul. The teachings of the Apostles were yet freshly remembered,[36] when he wrote his epistle to the Corinthians at the close of the first century. From the remonstrances which he utters, it appears that the community at Corinth was then divided against itself by the struggle of its members to get possession of its offices. "The base and the inglorious," writes the Roman, "have risen against the honorable and the glorious, the foolish against the wise, the young against the old. . . . . Wherefore are these quarrels and passions and dissensions, amounting to actual wars, amongst you? . . . . Wherefore do we thus tear asunder and divide the members of Christ, and wrestle with our own body? . . . . Your controversies," adds the sorrowing Christian, "have perverted many, have thrown many into dejection, many into doubt, and all of us into affliction."[37]

Clement might well be grieved. He saw a handful of converts to the Christian faith, mostly of humble origin, and all belonging to a city where every station of real authority was in the possession of the Heathen. Yet these same Christians were engaging in fierce contentions for offices of which the only proper exercise was in hours of penitence and of devotion. It is a dark shadow that the controversy throws upon the Christian communities. But

[36] *Ἔτι ἔναυλον τὸ κήρυγμα τῶν Ἀποστολῶν καὶ τὴν παράδοσιν πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἔχων.* Irenæus, Cont. Hæres., III. 3. 3. Tertullian (De Præscr. Hær., 32,) says that Clement was ordained by St. Peter. He was undoubtedly the same of whom St. Paul speaks, Phil., IV. 3.

[37] Clem., Ad Cor., 2, 3, 43.

there are darker shadows still. The Corinthian converts swept in with strife, to say nothing of their baser sensualities, to the very table of their Lord.[38] "Now in this I declare," wrote St. Paul to them, "I praise you not, that ye came together not for the better, but for the worse."[39] "Know ye not," he asks, "that your bodies are the members of Christ?"[40] Nor were the Corinthians alone in their shame. "Remember," writes St. John, at a later time, to the community at Ephesus, "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works."[41] "I know thy works," writes the same Apostle to the Christians at Sardis, "that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead."[42]

The deliverance from the ancient laws was not yet universal. One party, under the name of Nazaræans or Ebionites, clung to the observances of the Jewish system.[43] Another, like the Christians of Corinth, were sinking beneath the indulgences allowed by the Heathen system.[44] A third party, to which the Gnostic name applies, reverted to the principles of both Heathenism and Judaism.[45] All the three yielded to the same motive that had of

[38] See I. Cor., xi. 20 *et seq.*

"Once sacred house; which when they entered in,
They thought the place could sanctify a sin." DRYDEN.

[39] I. Cor., xi. 17.

[40] Ib., vi. 15.

[41] Rev., ii. 5.

[42] Ib., iii. 1.

"The more fair and crystal is the sky,
The uglier seem the clouds that in it fly."
Richard II.

[43] "They were Jews," says Epiphanius, "and nothing else, except that they believe in Christ." Adv. Hæreses, lib. i. tom. ii., xxix. 7. Eus., iii. 27.

[44] See St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapters v., viii., x., xi.

[45] Neander's account of Cerinthus may be consulted. Hist. of the Christ. Church, tom. i. pp. 396

old impelled men to seek the past whenever embarrassed by the present or by the future.

The more fervent converts plunged into the opposite extreme. Instead of accepting the good that had been established by the old systems, they rejected everything, good as well as evil. This may be accounted for as well by the inability of the rejecting party to distinguish between the evil and the good, as by their abhorrence of all subservience to the ancient laws. These, it was believed, must be wholly set aside before the law of love could be even partially established. It was thought necessary for mankind to begin afresh, as it were, upon its experiences, its triumphs and its reverses. Those that had occurred in former times were deemed unfit to warn or to guide the existing generation. But it had not been intended that the Christians should array themselves against their predecessors. The law of love had not been revealed at the opening of human destinies. Ages of trial had passed before it was declared. It would not triumph by renouncing the past.[46] Still less would it prevail where its votaries engaged in altercation with the votaries of every other law.[47] The impatience, the actual strife into which many of the Christians plunged, proved serious obstacles to their

et seq. On some of the early Gnostics, see the treatise ascribed by M. Bunsen to Hippolytus, Omnium Hæresium Refut., lib. v., 1 *et seq.*, p. 93 *et seq.*, ed. Paris.

[46] "Le Christianisme prit la société, non pas à son berceau, mais au point où le paganisme l'avait laissée." Beugnot, Destruction du Paganisme, tom. i. p. 3.

[47] Walch gives a long list of the parties already formed in the first century. Gesch. der Kezereien, Spaltungen und Religions-Streitigkeiten, vol. i. pp. 101–274.

appointed work. "This know also," had St. Paul foretold, "that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves. . . . . Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution."[48]

St. John perceived the danger. "The darkness is past," he declared, "and the true light now shineth." But "he," added the Apostle, "that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness until now." "Love not the world," he urged, as if he were addressing those who were attempting to submit the Christian to the ancient law, "neither the things in the world." But he adds with equal emphasis, as if to quiet the attempts to magnify the Christian law by rejecting every portion of the ancient systems, "we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world." St. John returns to the first purpose of his appeal. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments."[49] It is a touching recollection that the disciple whom Jesus most loved, was spared the longest to reassert the law of love as it had been revealed by his Master.[50] Even when too infirm to move his limbs, almost too feeble to open his lips, St. John still wished to be carried to the place where the Christians were assembled. "My children," he would whisper, "love one another."[51]

[48] II. Tim., III. 1, 2, 12.

[49] I. John, II. 8, 9, 15; IV. 14; v. 2.

[50] "Who was at once the beloved Apostle, and also, more peculiarly the Apostle of love." De Quincey's Reminiscences.

[51] "Filioli, diligite alterutrum." Hieron., Comment. lib. III. In Ep. ad Gal., c. vi.

Once asked why he said nothing more, he repeated the same exhortation, adding that it was the precept of the Lord, and that obedience to it was all he desired from his brethren.[52] "For love," declared the Christian who of all others in the early ages most resembled St. John, "love is able even from stones to raise up men."[53]

St. John died exactly at the close of the first century.[54] Before he left the world, the Gospels were published[55] to preserve the law of which he had been the last champion amongst the Apostles. Amidst passions and convulsions, the old laws still lingered. The Jewish law was again overhanging the Christians at Jerusalem, where one of their communities was once more founded. Upon the rest of their communities the Heathen law was about to let loose its persecutors. The field was full of dangers to the seed. But the seed had been sown by Divine hands. It had been tended and protected by human hands. The liberty bestowed upon mankind had found abiding defence, abiding culture in the Christian communities.

What this liberty was has been stated. It was the liberty of the subject. But in what the liberty of the subject consisted may now be more clearly

[52] "Quia præceptum Domini est; et si solum fiat, sufficit." Id., Ib.

[53] Chrysostom., In I. Cor., Hom. XXXIII.

[54] A. D. 100. Eus., Chron. Irenæus, Cont. Hær., II. 22. 5; III. 3. 4. Eusebius (Hist., III. 23) describes his superintendence of the Communities in Asia.

[55] Acts, I. 1 *et seq.* Papias, ap. Eus., II. 15; III. 39. Irenæus, Cont. Hær., III. 1. 1. Cf. Id., III. 11. 8. See, especially, Norton on the Genuineness of the Gospels, Part. I. ch. III.

perceived than before. It was not the deliverance of the subject from all external oppression. The slave might remain in servitude.[56] The inferior would continue in inferiority. No one, however low, however enslaved, was to free or to raise himself by any outward means. Nor were the high or the mighty to be reduced by any outward means. To all the offer of liberty was made. It was the liberty to do their duty to themselves, to their fellow-creatures, to their Eternal Creator. This was the liberty before which, unless embraced by him, the ruler would eventually fall. This was the liberty by which, if embraced by them, the subjects would rise.

[56] Clement of Rome describes the liberation of some of the slaves around him. But was it by insurrection — by violence? "Many amongst us," he says, "have submitted themselves unto bondage in order to free others." Ad Cor., I. 55. What would the modern agitator say to such a course?

BOOK II.

THE FIELD.

A. D. 1–100.

"God hath created nothing simply for itself, but each thing in all things, and of everything each part in other hath such interest, that in the whole world nothing is found whereunto anything created can say, 'I need thee not.'"

HOOKER, Sermon III.

BOOK II.

THE FIELD.

CHAPTER I.

THE ROMAN POWER.

"Cette centralisation gigantesque qui nous étonne comme une fable."
THIERRY, *De l'Administration Provinciale de l'Empire Romain.*

Of the earth, known at the coming of the Saviour, the greater portion was embraced in three nearly contiguous empires. The regions in which the earliest human institutions are supposed to have been founded were included in the realms of Parthia, once a Persian province, but long since become an independent dominion. Eastward, lay the territories connected with the Chinese empire, of which the extent had been greatly increased by successive conquests. To the west of Parthia, and completing the zone from the Pacific to the Atlantic seas, stretched the broad domains of Rome. Various as were the races and the institutions of these three empires, the same system of centralization had triumphed over all.

Southward and northward of the lands thus occupied, were more unsettled territories. Uncertain boundaries chequered the wide expanse inhabited by uncertain tribes. Over most of these prevailed the passion for warfare, from which every form of the ancient centralization had derived its origin. So far as it found development amongst the northern or the southern races, it assumed the same shapes in which it had expanded amongst the central nations. But the hordes upon the frontiers were still too restless and too ungovernable to fall into the lines where stood submissive the subjects within the same frontiers. The cry of war resounded especially through the North. It seemed to be prognosticated that destruction must precede pacification upon the earth. As clearly did it seem to be prognosticated that when pacification came, whether with the triumph of the Chinese, the Parthian, the Roman, or with that of the barbarian, there would be no other means of preserving peace but centralization.

Such was the field appointed to receive the seed of the new liberty. Not yet so vast, however, were the limits within which the seed was sown. Out of the different realms upon the earth, the Empire of Rome had been chosen as the birth-place of our Saviour. To the same empire belonged the Apostles whom He called, and the great majority of the converts whom they drew from beneath the ancient laws into the Christian communities.[1] The

[1] "Henceforward the Roman empire acquires in our eyes a nearer interest; as a country to which we were before indifferent, becomes at once endeared to us, when we know it to be the abode

liberty of the Christian was revealed where the servitude of the Heathen and of the Jew had proved most oppressive. Nowhere had centralization so swelled to its utmost capacity as at Rome. Nowhere did it then seem destined to prevail so lastingly as where the Romans, though themselves enervated, seemed to have their successors appointed in their northern foes. In the field, rather, in the part of the field where it was most needed, was sown the liberty of the early Christians.[2]

Though but a portion of the earth, the Roman empire was well nigh boundless. Its provinces, eighteen in number, lay spread within the Euphrates on the east, the mountains and deserts of Africa on the south, the Danube and the Rhine on the north, and the Atlantic on the west.[3] Nor was this all. "The entire Euphrates," says one of the Roman subjects in the first century, "has not sufficed, nor the Danube, nor Lybia, though stretching to unpeopled regions, nor Cadiz. . . . . For the Romans have stretched their views beyond the limits of the world."[4]

The same writer enumerates the "numberless nations" within these mighty realms. "The Athenians, who drove back Xerxes, ... the Lacedemonians, notwithstanding Thermopylæ and Platæa, ...

of those we love." Arnold, Later Rom. Commonwealth, vol. II. p. 400.

2 "And with Roman chains
The tidings come of Jesus crucified."
WORDSWORTH.

3 Some of the territory north of the Rhine was included; while, on the other hand, a part of the south of the Danube was not included within the limits of the Empire.

4 Josephus, Bell. Jud., II., 16. 4. The passage occurs in a supposed discourse of Agrippa.

the Macedonians, likewise, still dreaming of Philip and Alexander, and the dominion of the universe, ... the five hundred cities of Asia, ... those that dwell by the Euxine, ... the Illyrians and the Dalmatians, ... the Gauls, ... the tribes of Lusitania and Cantabria, ... Africa in her length and breadth, ... all have received the yoke."[5] Of this great multitude the number, at the opening of our era, is supposed to have approached, if not exceeded, one hundred millions.[6]

At the centre of the Empire was the peninsula of Italy. At the centre of Italy stood the city which had given its name to the Empire. There had been reared the conquerors of the early times. There had been appointed the later conquerors, who, leaving the Italian soil subdued, pressed on to vanquish races in every land, lands in every clime. The tributes, the services, the homages of the ancient world centred in the city of Rome.[7]

The masters of the city appeared to be the masters of the Empire. Elsewhere, the very name of liberty had almost ceased to be repeated. But it was frequently heard at Rome. There were many to suppose that they shared in the dominion which was exercised over the subject nations.

[5] Josephus, Bell. Jud., II. 16. 4. For a modern account, see Thierry, Hist. de la Gaule sous la Domination Rom., Introduction, tom. I. pp. 93 *et seq.*

[6] "La inmensa muchedumbre Esclava del Romano."
ZORRILLA.
Compare the estimate in Moreau's Statistique des Peuples de l'Antiquité, tom. II. p. 377, with that in Champagny's work, Les Césars, tom. III. App., p. 384, or Milman's edition of Gibbon, ch. II.

[7] *Τ᾽ην τοσ᾽ηνδε*, exclaims the later rhetorician Aristides, *εἰς μιᾶς πόλεως ὄνομα συνηγμένην* — "So much of the universe united under the name of a single city!" In Romam Orat., ad init.

There were many, therefore, to suppose themselves free.[8] But those who did so were in part only the descendants of Romans. The majority of the dwellers at Rome were of Italian origin. A large number were of provincial stock. Only the minority were of Roman blood. It was natural that such a people, partly Asian, partly African, partly European, anything, in short, but wholly Roman,[9] should hold both dominion and liberty by different tenures from those in possession of the ancient Romans. Free in comparison with the other subjects of the empire, the Romans were themselves subject. Masters in name, they were in reality slaves. The centralization concentrating a world-wide authority in their hands reduced them likewise beneath an authority more absolute than their own.

This, nominally, was the imperial power. Its possessor went by no single name. As Emperor, he was but the chief of the army. As Prince, or rather as Consul or Tribune, he was but the chief in the assembly or at the tribunal. As Chief

[8] As the Cives (citizens), the other subjects being Latini (partial citizens), or Peregrini (aliens). Ulpian., Frag., tit. v. 4. ed. Hugo. The number of citizens at the beginning of our era (A. C. 8) is stated to have been 4,063,000. Mon. Ancyr., Tab. Secund. a læv. In A. D. 48, the census of Claudius gave 6,941,000, or 6,943,000 citizens. Tacitus, Annal., XI. 25. Eus., Chron., ad ann. XLVI.

[9] Thus Lucan: —

"Galatæque, Syrique,
Cappadoces, Gallique, extremique orbis Hiberi,
Armenii, Cilices; nam, post civilia bella,
Hic populus Romanus erit."
Phars., VII. 540 – 543.

The soberer philosopher, the scholar, and the jurist tell the same story. See Senec., Cons. ad Helv., 6; Plin., Nat. Hist., III. 3, 4, 24 (where the grants of "Latin" rights in all quarters are mentioned); and Gaius, I. 33, 34, (where the citizen is described as gaining his rights by house or ship building!)

Pontiff, he was but the chief of religion. His various titles, taken together, constituted him the supreme ruler. At first donned successively rather than collectively, they were afterwards assumed at once by virtue of a law of Commission or Investiture,[10] with which the senate greeted the sovereign on his accession. The earliest form of the law authorizes the Emperor, as he may be styled, to enter into treaties "with whomsoever he pleases," to direct the elections[11] as well as the legislative[12] and judicial[13] proceedings in which the citizens, as they were still called, took part. He is also empowered to adopt any measures "pertaining to the common interest, or to the majesty of private and public, human and divine affairs." At the same time, he is declared to be "exempted from the laws,"[14] in other words, to be irresponsible.[15]

[10] This is the Lex de Imperio, also called Lex Regia, concerning which various theories have been entertained. I have described it as emanating from the Senate. It was confirmed in the Comitia, that is, in the assembly of the citizens at large.

[11] "Ad curam Principis magistratuum creatio pertinet, non ad populi favorem." Digest., lib. XLVIII. tit. XIV. Tiberius the Emperor was the first to transfer the elections from the assemblies to the Senate. Tac., Ann., I. 15. Vell. Pat., II. 126.

[12] "Quod Principi placuit, legis habet vigorem." Ulpian., Frag., tit. IV. 1. Augustus was the first to exercise control even over the responses, or opinions, of the Jurisconsults. Pomponius, ap. Digest., lib. I. tit. II., II. 47. The Edicts, Decrees and Rescripts, together with the Mandates and Epistles of the Emperors themselves, were all included under the generic name of Constitutio. "Id est," says Pomponius, (as above, II. 12) ut quod ipse Princeps constituit, pro lege servetur." See Hugo's Hist. Rom. Law, CCLXXXV.

[13] See the account of Augustus by his biographer. Suetonius, Aug., 32, 33.

[14] "Legibus . . . . solutus." Lex de Vespasiani Imper., ap. Brotier, Excurs. ad Tac. Hist. lib. IV. The Emperor could confer the same exemption upon the Empress. Ulpian., ap. Digest., lib. I. tit. III. 31.

[15] *Ἀνυπεύθυνον ἀρχήν*, is the expression of Philo, De Virt., pp. 550, 573, vol. II. ed. Mangey. The Senate yearly swore obedience to

This might be promised. But it could not be realized. The sovereign, like the people amidst whom he ruled, was of a different stamp from that of the olden time. Not war with the stranger, but war with the fellow-countryman was the portion of the later hero. The later ruler relied upon intrigue and corruption, where his predecessors had trusted to discipline and majesty. The Emperor was trained to dependence as much as to dominion. His dominion over his subjects rested upon his dependence on his courtiers and his soldiers.

The troops who had raised their great leader to be the first Emperor of Rome filled his successor with unconquerable dread. In vain did Augustus distribute the legions throughout the provinces. In vain did he select from their ranks a body to which he gave the name of Prætorians, and for a portion of which, as his guard, he marked out quarters within the city walls. The defence soon became as terrible as the danger against which it had been contrived. Nine or ten thousand men,[16] distinguished by the classes from which they were drawn, as well as by the constantly increasing privileges to which they were raised,[17] were not only more than a match for the legionaries at large; they

the Emperor. Dion Cass., XLVII. 18. LIII. 28. Tac., Ann., I. 72.

[16] Tacitus says there were nine cohorts. Ann., IV. 5. So does Suetonius, Aug., 49. Dion Cassius mentions ten. LV. 24. Each cohort contained a thousand, horse and foot.

[17] Treble pay, higher rank and shorter service than the legionaries. See Hegewisch, in the French translation, Sur l'Epoque de l'Hist. Rom. etc., App. 2, with the translator's notes.

Tiberius placed the whole body in a fortified camp upon the Viminal hill. Tac., Ann., IV. 2. The number of cohorts was raised to sixteen by Vitellius. Id., Hist., II. 93.

were more than a match for their sovereign likewise. It might still be the pleasure of the Prætorians to serve the Emperor to whose bounty they were accustomed. But it was inevitably his fate to be most apprehensive of them when they were most serviceable to him as his supporters against his subjects.[18]

Nor was the Prætorian power the only one before which the Emperors were obliged to quail. The very authority with which they had been overladen occasioned the necessity of delegating its exercise to others, who from servants often became masters of their sovereigns. Around the successive Emperors were collected a more and more numerous group of ministers or favorites. To their offices none could rise but men of subtlety and unscrupulousness, men before whom the Emperor employing them was frequently as powerless as his meanest subject. Side by side with the ruling favorites were arranged a host of subordinate courtiers. A court was formed of slaves and freedmen, informers and flatterers, mistresses and empresses, continually changing, but continually increasing. "Most of our sovereigns," wrote a Consul at the close of the first century, "though masters of citizens, have been the slaves of freedmen," with whom the court was largely filled. "By the counsels, by the will of these have they been governed. Through these have they heard, through these have they spoken. Through

[18] "Scit non esse ducis strictos, sed militis, enses." LUCAN.

"In dem der Character einer Militair-despotie sich mehr und mehr entfaltete." Schultz, Staatswissen-Schaft der Römer, p. 601, where is an account of the pay of the imperial troops.

these, nay, from these, likewise, have our prætorships, our priesthoods, our consulates been obtained." [19] The number of those upon whom the Emperor depended was thus doubled. Not only were the clamors of the army alarming; the intrigues of the court were overwhelming.[20] Where the two parties united against their sovereign, he could but make his submission. Only while they were contending against each other, could he attain to aught like independence.

Meanwhile the phantoms of former dignities continued to flit through Rome.[21] The names of Senators and Knights, of Consuls and Proconsuls, of Prætors and Quæstors were still heard at the elections. "Is any one," writes a contemporary, "exalted to the office of Tribune? All that meet him congratulate him. One kisses his eyes, another his neck, and the slaves kiss his hands. He goes to his house. He finds it illuminated. He ascends the Capitol and offers sacrifice." [22] So much exultation was more than any post in the Empire deserved. The office of the magistrate in the city, still more

[19] Plin., Pan., cap. 88. The uncle Pliny, Nat. Hist., xxxv. 58, laments in much the same terms.

On the informers, the delatores of the ancient histories, see Tac., Ann., I. 72–74, II. 50, IV. 28, VI. 10. Suet., Tib., 58, 61. Dion Cass., LVIII. 14.

[20] "For dreadful is the power that all may do"
LORD BROOKE'S *Mustapha*.

[21] The Digest enumerates the list of Senators and Consuls, Prætorian and City Præfects, Quæstors, Prætors, Proconsuls and Provincial Præfects, Procurators and Lieutenants, with many more. Lib. I. tit. IX. to XX.

"Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
What conflux issuing forth, or ent'ring in,
Prætors, Proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state;
Lictors and rods the ensigns of their power."
Paradise Regained.

[22] Epictetus, Diss., I. 19. Eliz. Carter's translation.

of him in the province, might appear to those beneath him to be invested with actual authority. But to those above him, often to himself, his powers must have seemed what they were, but nominal. "And what is the object?" asks the writer just quoted, of one who desired the consulship. "Twelve bundles of rods; to sit three or four times on the tribunal; to give the Circensian games and suppers to all the world. Or let any one show me what there is in it more than this!"[23]

These magistracies had crumbled long before. For years, for centuries, the course of events had tended to the concentration of power in fewer and still fewer hands. The rulers appointed by law had long been subordinate to those whom their swords or their treasures rendered supreme. When Augustus undertook to organize an imperial system, he used the materials that lay scattered about Rome. Using them, he would have had his subjects believe that they retained their pristine grandeur. A new life, according to those whom he persuaded, was imparted to the ancient institutions by their incorporation into the Empire.[24] This, to a certain degree, was the reality. All that the statutes, all that the offices of old could contribute to the imperial authority was preserved, if not restored, by being

[23] Epictetus, Diss., IV. 10.

"I nomi
De Cittadin di Roma e di Senato,
Nomi già sacri un giorno e vani in oggi."
ALFIERI, *Cleopatra*, III. 5.

[24] "Quasi ad alteram infantiam revoluta." Seneca, Frag., Ex Lactant., Div. Inst., VII. 15. "Per Augustum deinde reparata [Respublica]; si reparata dici potest libertate deposita." Flav. Vopiscus, Carus etc., 3.

accepted.[25] The Emperor assumed the ancient titles. He gave them to his dependents. He took it upon himself to watch over the ancient laws. Upon these and upon the magistracies which they upheld, his power ran the best chance of sustaining itself against the favorites and the troops who begirt his tottering throne.

Such was the organization of the Roman Empire. Its centralization, as may be readily perceived, surpassed all that had yet been known to mankind. A wider extent of territory, a greater variety of population than had ever been gathered into one dominion, acknowledged the sway of Rome. That city itself had lost those to whom it owed its greatness. It was filled with those to whom, with few exceptions, it owed its present subjection, its future destruction. Already had its nominal masters stooped to subjection beneath their Emperor. He, in his turn, shrinking before his courtiers on the one side, and on the other, before his soldiers, had nowhere to entrench himself but behind the institutions which had long since yielded to the violence and the oppression terminating in the Empire.

In such an Empire none could be free. Where were the powers to constitute the right to freedom? Where were the laws to constitute freedom a possession? Whether subjects or rulers, there were none fit to be called freemen. The Romans were

[25] "Le passage de la république à l'Empire . . . ne constituait point reéllement une réorganization, mais seulement un mode graduel de destruction chronique." Comte, Philos. Positive, tom. v. p. 274.

free only so far as they were superior to the provincial races. The members of the army or of the administration were free only so far as they were superior to the Romans. Corruption was the sole power which gave men the right to superiority. Force was the sole law which gave them the possession of superiority. But such a superiority involved no liberty. The intriguer at court had none. The brawler in the camp had none. Neither officer nor courtier had any. Least, perhaps, of all, can the Emperor be said to have been free.[26] The absence of liberty was universal.

Augustus died at Nola after a reign of four-and-forty years.[27] A son of his wife Livia, Tiberius Claudius Nero, already graced with the exalted title of Cæsar,[28] was left behind to fill the place of his step-father.[29] Born before Augustus began to reign, Tiberius had grown old in preparing for the hour that was come at last. He waited at Nola only to order the execution of a grandson of Augustus, before hastening to Rome. There the Consuls immediately took the oath of fidelity; their example being imitated, says the historian, by "Senate, soldiery and people." Little else could the people do but to hail their new master, and divide the

[26] "You will find," says Balmes in his great work upon Protestantism compared with Catholicity, "in the perils with which the thrones of the Roman Emperors were beset, one reason for their despotism." Ch. L., Eng. trans.

[27] A. C. 30 — A. D. 14.

[28] "Tam clarum," says the imperial biographer, "et duraturum cum æternitate mundi nomen." Æl. Spart., Æl. Verus, 2.

[29] "Le dernier présent d'Auguste." Rouxelle, Portrait de Tibère.

legacy which he brought them in the name of their former Emperor. The Prætorians might have hesitated. But Tiberius had instantly assumed the command of them, while their Præfect had as instantly proffered the oath of allegiance. It remained to be seen whether the oath would be maintained. Despatches were sent by Tiberius to the legions at a distance, especially to those commanded by his nephew and adopted son, Germanicus, whose favor with the army, still more than his popularity with the people, greatly terrified his uncle.[30] The Senate, meanwhile, was prostrating itself before the Emperor.

It had been convened by Tiberius as Tribune. Nothing, however, was proposed on his part, besides the consideration of the last honors to his predecessor. "For himself," he informed the Senate, "he desired nothing but the privilege of watching over the dead."[31] Even when the sepulture of Augustus had been performed, and the Senate again assembled, their first decrees related to the temple and the worship of their departed Emperor.[32] Not till then came up the question of succession to his authority on earth.

It was the first time that such a question had been raised. Augustus succeeded to his uncle Julius only after a fearful interval of civil war in which he came off conqueror. A few had dreamed of returning to the ancient institutions when he

[30] Tac., Ann., I. 7.
[31] Id., ib.
[32] Id., ib., I. 11.

died. But there stood Tiberius; and the only point to be decided was the manner in which his claims could be satisfied. Not, therefore, with edicts, but with prayers,[33] was the imperial power offered to him; while he, affecting a desire to decline it, gave vent to lamentations upon his incapacity and his age. With renewed solicitations, some weeping, others stretching out their hands to the images of the gods, and many falling at the knees of Tiberius, the five hundred Senators united in imploring him to be their master. He then ordered an account left by Augustus concerning the resources and the exigencies of the Empire to be read aloud. As this rather increased than checked the supplications of which he was the object, Tiberius was heard to murmur, that "though unequal to the charge of the whole, he would accept any part of the government that might be entrusted to him." "And what part," inquired Asinius Gallus, a man whom Augustus described as ambitious and incapable,[34] "what part would Cæsar prefer?" The question was evidently offensive. Gallus, therefore, was fain to say that he had asked it, only to prove the impossibility of dividing the government. "How long," cried out another Senator to Tiberius, "will you suffer the State to be headless?" "We may trust," exclaimed a third, "that Cæsar will not refuse us, since he has not used his authority as Tribune to forbid our proposals." One voice alone was raised more boldly.

[33] Versæ inde ad Tiberium preces." Tac., Ann., I.. 11.

[34] "Avidum et minorem." Id., ib., I. 13.

"Let Cæsar accept," it cried, "or else let him refuse!" A life-long hypocrite, Tiberius consented at the last only to conduct the government until it seemed fit to the Senate to allow him repose in his old age.[35] The titles with which his subjects would have crowned him were warily refused.[36] It was enough for him to consider himself their master.[37]

The conduct of the Senate suggests the helplessness of the masses. Very different is the aspect of the soldiery suggested by the proceedings amongst the legions. Those in Pannonia sent messengers to demand redress against their officers and increased privileges.[38] Those in Germany broke out into such disorders that their generals considered the authority of the Emperor in peril.[39] The main army in Germany went so far as to beseech their leader, the Cæsar Germanicus, to assume the imperial power. Nor was it without great difficulty that the loyal prince succeeded in securing the allegiance of the troops to his uncle and adoptive father, the Emperor.[40] The mutiny in Pannonia was quelled by the Cæsar Drusus, the son of Tibe-

[35] Suet., Tib., 24. Tac., Ann., I. 7–14. Vell. Paterc., II. 124. Dion Cass., LVII. 2. And the subjects would speak of "Ti. Cæsaris Augusti nati ad æternitatem Romani nominis." Orelli, Inscript. Lat. Select., 689.

[36] He would not be called Imperator or even Augustus. Suet., Tib., 26. Dion Cass., LVII. 2, 8. He used the latter title, however, in writing to foreign princes; while the former was assumed before the army. Eckhel, Doct. Num. Vet., tom. VI. p. 200.

[37] After all this, the Abbé de la Blêterie undertakes "de faire voir que la puissance impériale fut toujours élective de droit et de fait." Mém. de l'Acad., Inscript. et B. Lettres, tom. XIX. pp. 357 *et seq.* See other Mémoires, tom. XXI., XXIV., XXV., XXVII.

[38] Tac., Ann., I. 16 *et seq.*

[39] Id., ib., I. 31, IV. 18.

[40] Id., ib., I. 32 *et seq.*

rius, or rather by a large force of Prætorians sent with him against the insurgents. The legionaries yielded to the chosen troops whom they acknowledged as their superiors.[41] It was all the clearer that the imperial power belonged to him alone whom the army accepted as its Emperor.

There was another class whose voice was soon heard. It was that of the courtiers, the attendants, the ministers and even the women of the imperial palace. Tiberius ascended the throne without their recognition of his authority. They waited for him to establish his power, before they asserted theirs. His dependence upon them, as will presently appear, was not the less abject.

Such was the Roman power. It could not be upheld but by the basest oppressions. It could not be resisted but by the vainest insurrections. A weary waste of fruitless exertions, of heartless severities opens before us as we proceed.

[41] Tac., Ann., I. 24 *et seq.*

CHAPTER II.

HUMILIATION AT ROME.

"Romani qui cuncta diu rexere regendi;
Qui nec Tarquinii fastus, nec jura tulere
Cæsaris."

CLAUDIANUS, *De IV. Cons. Hon.*, 309–311.

"I KNOW a man," wrote Epictetus the Phrygian, in the first century of the Empire, "older than I am, and who is now a Præfect at Rome. When he passed through my town on his return from exile, what an account did he give me of his former life! And how did he promise, that for the future, when he had returned to Rome, he would apply himself to nothing else than how to spend the remainder of his days in repose and tranquillity! 'For how few,' he exclaimed, 'have I now remaining!' You will not do it, said I. When you are once within the smell of Rome, you will forget all this: and if you can but gain admittance to Court, you will go there, heartily rejoiced, and thanking the gods. 'If you ever find me,' said he, 'putting one foot into the Court, think of me what you please.' Now, after all, how did he act? Before he entered the city, he was met by a message from Cæsar. On

receiving it, he forgot all his former resolutions; and he has ever since been heaping up one engagement upon another!"[1]

Such men were the most numerous amongst those who entered into the movements of their times. But of such the account does not belong to a history of liberty. To find the proper subjects for these pages, we must seek those who endeavored to raise themselves from their humiliation. They may not have succeeded. They may not have aimed at a liberty in striving for which they could succeed. But in aspiring after any liberty, they proved themselves in advance of those who remained deep in subjection.

We begin at Rome. There, as has been related, were the broadest traces of the convulsions resulting in the establishment of the Empire. The population was changed. The relations between one class and another were altered. Many of the superior, many more of the inferior families, once dwelling amongst the seven hills, had disappeared.[2] Of those remaining the greater number were impoverished. Past distinctions had generally ceased. The political lines at present were those between the Roman, or the citizen, and the provincial, or the subject. The social lines were those between the rich and the poor. The personal lines were those between the bond and the so-called free.

[1] Epict., Diss., I. 10.

[2] An appendix to Les Cèsars by Champagny, tom. II. pp. 380 *et seq.*, describes the decay of the ancient families. See Tacitus, Ann., II. 38, VI. 14, XIV. 40.

Who of these could rise? Was it the slave? This class, no longer counted by households but by nations,[3] crowded all the lower thoroughfares of life. They pursued the more ordinary trades. They acquired the more ordinary accomplishments. Such as were attached to the persons of their masters played a more important part. Every interest of the lord was entrusted to his bondmen. Some of them he employed in the management of property; to others he committed the care of his wife and children. Some were the associates of his hours of study; others were the ministers to his days and nights of licentiousness.[4] The closer the connection of the slave with his master, the greater, it may seem, was the consideration which he received. It was not so. "Something there is," wrote the philosopher Seneca, "that the owner ought to provide for his slave, namely, food and clothing."[5] Beyond this, there was no obligation towards the bondman. Life and limb were at the mercy of the lord. It is true that there was some security against excessive cruelty while life remained to the slave. Were he compelled to fight with wild beasts

[3] "Familiarum numerum et nationes." Ap. Tac., Ann., III. 53. *Καὶ γὰρ μυρίους καὶ δισμυρίους καὶ ἔτι πλείους δὲ πάμπολλοι κέκτηνται.* Athenæus, cited by Lipsius, ad loc. The proportion of slaves throughout the Empire, according to Blair, (Inquiry into the State of Slavery amongst the Romans, Chap. I.) was that of three to every freeman. Dureau de la Malle denies that it could be nearly so large, even in Italy. Écon. Pol. des Romains, liv. II. ch. 7.

[4] On the various employments of the Roman slaves, see Wallon, Hist. de l'Esclav. dans l'Antiquité, ptie II. ch. III.

[5] "Est aliquid, quod dominus præstare servo debeat, ut cibaria, ut vestiarium." De Benef., III. 21. With this compare the truer tone of the philosopher's letter, Ep. 47.

as a gladiator,[6] were he wantonly exposed to destitution or to destruction on account of his infirmities, he had a right to claim redress.[7] This consisted in being set at liberty if he was unfit for servitude. If still in possession of his faculties, he might, in case of being treated with peculiar indignity, obtain his transfer to the possession of a new master.[8] In public, the slave was still more degraded. The state would not accept his service except upon compulsion.[9] Nor was the law more ready to acknowledge his rights. "In all relating to the civil law," declares the imperial jurist, "slaves are regarded as having no existence."[10] Was it the slave, we may repeat, who could rise?

In some instances, it was. But it was only to another stage of humiliation. Emancipation, laid as it was under severe restrictions,[11] transformed the bondman into the freedman.[12] The lowest class of freedmen continued in the dependence of the opulent. Others were employed in the military and civil offices of the public service. The highest class

[6] Digest., lib. XLVII. tit. VIII., XI. 2.

[7] Dion Cass., LX. 29, Suet., Claud., 25.

[8] Senec., De Benef., III. 22.

[9] Pliny, the humane scholar, counts the "servitiorum delectus" amongst the chief blemishes upon the fortune of Augustus. Nat. Hist., VII. 46. See the nephew Pliny's letter to Trajan and Trajan's reply concerning the punishment of two slaves, "repertos apud tirones." Epist., X. 38, 39.

[10] "Quod attinet ad jus civile, servi pro nullis habentur." It is of some comfort to hear him add: "non tamen et jure naturali; quia quod ad jus naturale attinet, omnes homines æquales sunt." Ulpian., ap. Digest., lib L. tit. XVII., XXXII.

[11] Especially by Augustus, in two laws, the lex Ælia Sentia, and the lex Fusia Caninia. Instit., lib. I., tit. VI. and VII. Gaius, I. 4 *et seq.*, 18 *et seq.*, 36 *et seq.* Suet., Aug., 40.

[12] To whom there were three *status*, as the phrase went. Instit., lib. I. tit. V. 3.

alone rose to the rank of Knights and Senators, or to the still more powerful position of imperial favorites. These, however, were exceptions to the general degradation of the freedmen.[13]

The free were nearly as dependent as the enslaved. By far the greater number had what may be truly called their masters. The populace was a strange medley of the old and of the new races with which Rome was peopled. The better portion is described, by the historian of the first century, as "dependent upon the great houses." The other portion is represented as "the rabble hanging about the circus and the theatres, supported only by the imperial largesses."[14] Was it one of the populace that could rise? A poor man, who should have undertaken to trust to independent exertion for his advancement, would have been thought insane by those around him. Was it one of the richer class who could rise? They had already risen as far as it was possible. And how did they stand where they had risen? Some leant on their slaves, the creatures of those whom they made their menials.

[13] On their condition generally, see a Memoir by De Burigny, De l'Affranchissement et de l'État des Affranchis. Acad. des Inscrip. et Belles-Lettres, tom. xxxvii. pp. 313 *et seq.* The same writer has a memoir Sur les Esclaves Romains, Ib., tom. xxxv. pp. 328 *et seq.*

[14] The account in full is as follows: "Pars populi integra et magnis domibus annexa, clientes libertique damnatorum et exulum; . . . . plebs sordida, et circo ac theatris sueta, . . . aut qui, adesis bonis, per dedecus Neronis alebantur.' Tac., Hist., I. 4.

The largesses were given in festivals or in food. Two hundred thousand shared the grain distributed by Augustus. Dion Cass., LV. 10. A ration of oil was added by Septimius Severus. Spart., Sever., 18. Bread was afterwards distributed instead of corn. Vopisc., Aurel., 35. See Naudet, Des Secours Publics chez les Romains, Mém. de l'Acad., tom. XIII. pp. 57 *et seq.* Nouv. Série.

Others threw themselves upon their riches. "Were the gold and the silver of the whole earth besides," says a contemporary, "all raked together, it would not come up to the possessions of the wealthy in Rome and Italy."[15] "The rich man," wrote one who dwelt amidst this opulence, "wishes to sit upon ivory, to be clothed with purple, to be roofed over with gold..... He lies on heaps of silver and gold. He possesses fields, to which the name of provinces belong. Of his single villas, the boundaries extend farther than those which Proconsuls govern."[16] Wealth came to be the one great good in the eyes of those who had it. It was the same in the eyes of those who had it not.[17] "I once saw a person," wrote Epictetus, "weeping and embracing the knees of Epaphroditus.[18] He was deploring his hard fortune in having no more than fifty thousand pounds sterling left. What said Epaphroditus? Did he laugh at him, as we should do? No! He cried out with astonishment, 'Poor man! How could you be silent? How could you bear it?'"[19] Was it for the rich or the poor, free though they were called, to rise from their humiliation at Rome?

[15] Philo. De Virtute, p. 561, ed. Mang.

[16] Seneca, De Ira, I. 16. Citations from Seneca might easily be multiplied. De Brev. Vit., 12; or for a single picture, Ep. 86. See a memoir by De Pastoret, Mém. de l'Institut, Inscript. et B. Lettres, tom. VII. pp. 125 *et seq.*, or the work of Meirotto, Sitten und Lebensart der Römer, vol. II. pp. 167 *et seq.*

[17] Some of the decaying families were assisted from the imperial treasury to recover themselves. Tac., Ann., VI. 17. Hist., I. 20. Sen., De Brev. Vit., 8.

[18] A favorite of Nero, and the patron of Epictetus himself.

[19] Diss., I. 26. The estimate of the sum is the translator's.

Only at intervals do the better instincts of humanity appear. The Cæsar Germanicus, the only member of the reigning family who deserved the allegiance of its subjects,[20] fell a victim to the jealousy of his adoptive father, the Emperor Tiberius. To the poorly concealed satisfaction of the sovereign, was at once opposed the openly expressed lamentation of his subjects.[21] "The Commonwealth," they exclaimed, "is lost; no hope remains."[22] Nor could Tiberius check the murmurs of the people without confessing that "princes were but mortal, while the Commonwealth was eternal."[23] The sympathy of the Romans towards Germanicus was that of inferiors for their superior. As superiors they had other sympathies to show towards their inferiors. A household of slaves was ordered to execution because one of their number had slain his master, Pedanius Secundus, the Præfect of the city.[24] Not only did the populace rise in insurrection against a punishment so cruel, and one of men so innocent, but the higher classes gave vent through their Senators to their desire that the punishment should be stayed. The majority, however, of the Senate ordered it to proceed. But it could not be carried out until the streets through which the slaves were to be conducted to death were held by the

[20] Suetonius pronounces his eulogy. Cal., 3.

[21] "Aberat quippe adulatio gnaris omnibus lætam Tiberio Germanici mortem male dissimulari." Tac., Ann, III. 2.

[22] "Concidisse rempublicam; nihil spei reliquum!" Id., ib., 4. Suetonius (Cal., 5) describes the stoning of temples and the exposure of infants, by reason of the general anguish.

[23] Tac., Ann., III. 6.

[24] Id., ib., XIV. 42.

troops against the people.[25] This was in the reign of Nero.

There were individuals also to prove the existence of nobler impulses.[26] The historian wonders at the boldness of Pomponius Marcellus, a grammarian who dared to say that a word employed in an edict by Tiberius did not belong to the language.[27] But there were instances of boldness to amaze the historian still more. Lucius Piso, one of the most eminent Romans, complained of the public corruptions as having reached a height at which he would no longer behold them. "I will leave the city," he said, "for some secret and distant place of abode."[28]

Meanwhile the power nominally vested in Tiberius the Emperor was actually held by Ælius Sejanus, the Præfect of the Prætorians. "He is not imposed," said the historian Cremutius Cordus, "he mounts upon us without any other authority than his own."[29] Two of the Præfect's clients at once arraigned Cordus, not, however, as having slandered their patron, but as having lauded Brutus and Cassius in his annals. The trial was held in the Senate before the Emperor. "This," declared the accused, "is an un-

[25] "Sed obtemperari non poterat, conglobata multitudine et 'saxa ac faces' minitante. Tum Cæsar populum edicto increpuit, atque omne iter quo damnati ad pœnam ducebantur militaribus præsidiis sepsit." Tac., Ann., XIV. 45.

[26] "Ma in tanta strage, or chi m'addita
e scopre
In corpo vivo, e non in bronzo o in sasso,
Una reliquia di Fabrizi e Curi?"
GHEDINI.

[27] Dion Cass., LVII. 17. Suet., De Illust. Gram., 22.

[28] Tac., Ann., II. 34. He was one of Tiberius' victims in after years. Id., ib., IV. 21.

[29] "In cervices nostras nec imponi quidem sed escendere." Cf. Sen., Ad Marc. Cons., 22.

heard-of charge. . . . . If I am condemned, there will be men to remember not only Cassius and Brutus, but me likewise."[30] Without waiting sentence, he went home. "There is nothing left," he told his daughter Marcia, "but to die." A few days' abstinence from food ended the life of the historian. His writings were ordered by the Senate to be burned. But a copy was treasured by Marcia the daughter, until it could once more be brought out at Rome.[31]

A higher mark than Cremutius Cordus, was already before Sejanus the Prætorian. Not content with the authority, he coveted the title likewise of the Emperor. Tiberius would have fallen but for his appointment of another, Sertorius Macro, to the command which Sejanus held.[32] The number of suicides and executions was increased by the change of ministers, the new one not thinking himself safe until he had slain all in the service of his predecessor. Amongst the partisans of the late Præfect was Lentulus Gætulicus, at this time commander of the legions quartered in Upper Germany. He wrote to Tiberius, reminding him of its having been at his own advice that he, Lentulus, had curried favor with Sejanus. With the help of his soldiers, added Lentulus, he would resist every effort on the part of the reigning Præfect to remove him from his command. Alone of all attached to the fallen minister, Lentulus Gætulicus was spared.[33]

[30] Tac., Ann., IV. 35.

[31] Id., ib. Sen., Ad Marc. Cons., 1. Suet., Cal., 16. Dion Cass., LVII. 24. This was A. D. 25.

[32] A. D. 31. Tac., Ann., V. 6 *et seq.*

[33] Tac., Ann., VI. 30. He was put to death by Caligula seven or eight years afterwards. Dion Cass., LIX. 22.

Not long afterwards, it being then twenty-three years from his accession, Tiberius was murdered by Macro the Prætorian.[34] The same hand assisted the son of Germanicus and the great nephew of Tiberius, Caius, surnamed Caligula,[35] to seat himself upon the empty throne. He had not spent four years in boasting of his tyranny,[36] when he fell beneath the blows of some of his Prætorians.[37] The troops proclaimed his uncle Claudius.[38] The new Emperor was a cross between the scholar and the debauchee. His mother said that he was but half a man.[39] For fourteen years,[40] the helpless sovereign was ruled by his freedmen,[41] and outraged by his wives, the Empresses Messalina and Agrippina, the daughter of Germanicus. Claudius was even less free than his subjects.

The year after his accession, the general commanding the legions in Dalmatia was by them declared Emperor. He wrote to demand the abdication of Claudius. With so much resolution did he make the demand, that the timid sovereign was on the point of complying,[42] when the legions, repenting their choice, put their new Emperor to death.

[34] A. D. 37. Tac., Ann., VI. 50. Suet., Tib., 73.

[35] A name, corresponding, perhaps, to our "bootee," given in his youth by his father's troops. Sen., De Const. Sap., 18.

[36] A. D. 37 – 41. He said to his grandmother, "Memento omnia mihi et in omnes licere." Suet., Cal., 29.

[37] Josephus gives the clearest account of the whole affair. Ant., XIX. 1 to 4. Bell. Jud., II. 11. See, also, Sen., De Const. Sap., 18, and De Brev. Vit., 18, besides the usual authorities.

[38] The brother of Germanicus, consequently the nephew of Tiberius.

[39] Suet., Claud., 3.

[40] A. D. 41 – 54.

[41] See Pliny Junior's account of Pallas, Ep., VII. 29, VIII. 6.

[42] Suet., Claud., 13, 35.

One of his officers and chief supporters, Cæcina Pætus, was arrested and sent to Rome. His wife, Arria, not being permitted to accompany her husband, followed him in a fishing-boat across the Adriatic, reaching Rome in season to attend him at his trial before the Emperor. There was but one sentence to be pronounced. There was but one way of escaping the dishonor of a public execution. Pætus hesitated. But Arria seized his sword, and, stabbing herself, drew out the weapon, exclaiming, as she placed it in her husband's hands: "It gives no pain!"[43]

Claudius was slain by his Empress Agrippina. Her son, Domitius Ahenobarbus, by another husband, was proclaimed Emperor, under the title of Nero. The young sovereign soon threw off his mother's influence. But it was because he fell beneath the influence of Afranius Burrus, the Prætorian Præfect, with whom was associated Annæus Seneca, the courtier and the philosopher.[44] These, in their turn, were succeeded by Poppæa Sabina, at first the mistress, and then the Empress.[45]

Her name is connected with that of a better woman. Octavia, married to Nero the year before her father Claudius perished, was banished to make

[43] "Pæte, non dolet." Plin., Ep., III. 16. Dion Cass., LX. 15, 16.

[44] "Hi rectores imperatoriæ juventæ." The historian praises them for restraining the inhumanity of Agrippina and her son. Tac., Ann., XIII. 2. Yet Burrus suggested the means by which Nero was to murder his mother. Id., ib., XIV. 7. And Seneca wrote a letter for the parricide to send to the Senate, declaring that Agrippina, having failed in a conspiracy against him, had put an end to her existence. Id., ib., 7, 8.

[45] Id., ib., XV. 61.

room for Poppæa. So frequent and so open were the remonstrances addressed in her behalf to Nero, that he took alarm, and ordered her recall. The Romans, helpless and indifferent as they had appeared during all the intrigues of the court, now broke out into courageous joy. Crowds poured up to the Capitol. Thence descending, they bore to the Forum and the sacred temples of the city the images of Octavia, crowned with flowers. Increasing in numbers and in acclamations, the multitude pressed on to the imperial palace. The Emperor, terrified by the clamor, still more by the love which was shown for his injured wife, was easily induced to order a charge of soldiers upon his subjects. They fled, while Poppæa, who witnessed their discomfiture, once more secured the banishment of Octavia. Sent to a greater distance, and under more atrocious imputations than before, she was soon relieved by a sentence of death from the hatred which had prevailed against the affection of the Romans.[46] A tragedy, called by her name, still bears witness to the injustice with which she was persecuted. It is ascribed to Seneca; and if there be anything to redeem his memory in his relations with the court, it would be the fact that such an effort to vindicate the fame of Octavia was naturally imputed to him.[47]

[46] A. D. 62. Tac., Ann., XIV. 60 *et seq.* Poppæa was killed a few years after by a kick from her imperial husband. Id., ib., XVI. 6.

[47] Note the regrets of the author that he had been tempted to seek for power. Octav., 377 *et seq.* And mark his lamentation upon the story which he had to tell:

"Nullum Pietas nunc numen habet,
Nec sunt Superi. Regnat mundo
Tristis Erinnys.
Quis mea [Octavia loquitur] digne deflere
potest
Mala?" Ib., 911–915.

The same year in which Octavia died removed one who had doubtless been amongst her defenders. Aulus Persius Flaccus, born of a distinguished family, and connected in his manhood with the best men of the higher order, had not been endowed in vain with poetic power. "We are in want of liberty," . . . . he cried; "but it is that of them who can be contented with little. Is thy house a frugal one? Art thou generous to those around thee? Dost thou close thy granaries, that thou mayest open them to those who need? . . . . For if thou canst truly say that these things are thine, thou art free."[48] Persius then turns upon the despotism that prevented his countrymen from attaining even to the limited freedom which he set before them. "Thou," he exclaims, "who hast undertaken the government of the people, in what dost thou trust? Perchance wisdom and the knowledge of affairs have come to thee before their time, and thou hast learned what should be spoken and what should be kept in silence! . . . . Thou knowest how to weigh justice in the balances of a righteous scale! Thou canst discern the straight line from the curve; or mark our obliquities from the rule of right! Thou, also, art able to detect the wicked, and to punish those deserving it by death!"[49] The taunt upon Nero was thinly veiled by being professedly directed against Alcibiades. But the sat-

[48] "Libertate opus est . . . .
Es modicus voti? presso lare? dulcis amicis?
Jam nunc adstringas, jam nunc granaria laxes? . . . .
Hæc mea sunt, teneo, quum vere dixeris, esto
Liberque ac sapiens."
Sat., v. 75–114.

[49] Sat., iv. 1 *et seq.*

irist confesses that he is exerting himself in vain. "You must speak of these things amongst rough soldiers who will laugh at you for your pains."[50]

Equally fruitless were the exertions of a friend of Persius, although an older man, Thrasea Pætus the Senator.[51] Unable to sustain himself in the dignity which he thought befitting his office, he withdrew to a retirement in which few besides his kindred shared.[52] The charge of absenting himself from his public duties, and of encouraging others to do the same,[53] was brought against Thrasea by one who bore him an ancient grudge. The accused instantly addressed a memorial to Nero, requesting to know the heads of the accusation, which he promised to refute, were the opportunity allowed. The Emperor, who had counted upon unqualified submission, made no reply to the application, but ordered the Senate to assemble amidst armed lines of the Prætorians.[54] Five others were arraigned with Thrasea. His son-in-law, Helvidius Priscus, bore the blame of sharing in his factiousness.[55] Paconius Agrippinus had transgressed in being the son

[50] Sat., v. 189 – 192. Persius died in 62, when but twenty-seven years old. Persii Vit., ap. Suet.

[51] His movements may be traced in Tac., Ann., XIII. 33, 49, XIV. 12, 48, 49, XVI. 21.

[52] "Coronati Thrasea Helvidiusque bibebant
Brutorum et Cassi natalibus."
JUV., *Sat.*, v. 36, 37.

Helvidius was his son-in-law. The daughter of Cæcina Pætus' Arria was his wife.

[53] "Diurna populi Romani per provincias, per exercitus curatius leguntur, ut noscatur quid Thrasea non fecerit." Tac., Ann., XVI. 22. Now A. D. 16.

[54] As many as two thousand "dispersi per fora ac basilicas." Id , ib., XVI. 27.

[55] "In iisdem furoribus." Id., ib., XVI. 28.

of one whom Tiberius had put to death.[56] Against Curtius Montanus, a younger man, was brought the more substantial charge of having published a satirical poem against the Emperor. Barea Soranus, who had grown old since his proconsulate in the Asian provinces, was accused of having at that time entertained seditious schemes.

A fresher accusation, however, was concocted both against Soranus and his daughter Servilia, on the ground that she had lately been consulting magicians about the possibility of saving her father. The child and the parent were brought into the Senate. On one side of the tribunal was placed the old man; on the other stood the daughter, not yet twenty years of age, whose husband had been exiled, and whose father was now threatened with death, in consequence, to a great degree, of her anxiety.[57] Not daring to look at him, Servilia listened to the questions of the accuser. "Didst thou not sell," he asked, "thy bridal ornaments to pay for these incantations?" She threw herself upon the pavement, and after weeping long in silence, she rose and clung to the altar in the Senate-house. "I have invoked no forbidden gods," she said at length. "I have made no incantations, nor have I prayed for anything in my sad prayers, except that thou, O Cæsar, and that ye, O Fathers, would preserve my much-loved parent. I have given my

[56] "Quid Agrippino objectum, nisi tristem patris fortunam?" Tac., Ann., XVI. 29. See Suet., Tib., 61. Agrippinus is highly praised by Epictetus, whom Lipsius cites ad loc. Tacit.

[57] "Cujus onerasse pericula videbatur." Tac., Ann., XVI. 30.

gems, my robes, and the ornaments of my rank in the same way that I would have given my blood and my life, had they been demanded. . . . . If it is a crime that I have committed, I alone am guilty." Her father here broke in. "She did not go with me," he exclaimed, "to the province. Besides, she was then much too young to have participated in the guilt with which I am charged. Neither has she had any share in the misdeeds of which her husband was accused. Do not confound her with me. She is guilty only of too much love for her father. For myself, I will bear any fate." He turned as he spoke, and would have embraced her, but the lictors interposed.[58]

The Senate that could proceed to condemn such offenders as these may seem to have deserved the fate which it pronounced upon them. But it was wholly helpless. The powers that one sovereign had given, another had taken away. It was called the head of the Empire,[59] only as being foremost in submission.[60] Nero sat looking on, and crowds of the Prætorians stood by with drawn swords, while sentence was declared. Montanus, the author of the libel, alone escaped. Even he, though the son of a father in favor at the court, was ordered to keep himself in strict retirement. Paconius Agrippinus and Helvidius Priscus were both banished from Italy.[61] Servilia, Soranus, and Thrasea Pætus ob-

[58] Tac., Ann., XVI. 31, 32.

[59] "Caput imperii." Id., ib., I. 84.

[60] Nero had laid it lower than ever. Dion. Cass., ap. Xiph., LXI. 17, 19. Eutr., VII. 9.

[61] A passage from Arrian cited by Lipsius (ad Tac., Ann., XVI. 29,) describes the manner in which Agrippinus received his sentence.

tained no other grace than that of choosing the manner of their death. Such was the vindictiveness with which they had been pursued, that Cassius Asclepiodotus, a Bithynian who came forward to testify in favor of his old Proconsul, Soranus, was stripped of all his property and driven into exile.[62] The accusers, on the other hand, were rewarded with money and with office, according to the effect of their charges against the condemned.[63]

Thus Nero, rather his courtiers and his troops, prevailed. The worst of the Romans triumphed over the best. The Emperor profited by the times. "What," asks Apollonius, "do they say he is doing?" "Driving his chariot," answers Philolaus, "singing, going about the theatre, and living with gladiators. Nay, he himself plays the gladiator and kills men outright."[64] When the novelty of feats like these was exhausted, the Emperor ordered, as was believed, the city to be set on fire. To divert himself as well as his houseless subjects, he then commanded the votaries of foreign religions to be put to death by frightful torture.[65] Kindling with the impunity attending his achievements, he began the

He was not present at the trial; and on being told that he was condemned to exile, he said, "Let us go to dine at Aricia."

[62] Galba allowed him to return. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXII. 26.

[63] Tac., Ann., XVI. 33. The death of Thrasea is in Id., ib., 34, 35. He said that his memory would last. Dion Cass., ap. Mai, Script. Vet. Collectio, tom. II. p. 210.

[64] Philostrat., Apoll. Tyan. Vit., IV. 36. "Princeps gladiatorum," says Pliny, Nat. Hist., XXXVII. 16. See Tac., Ann., XIV. 14, 15. The highest men, the highest women, followed the example of the sovereign. Tac., Ann., XIII. 34, XIV. 14, 15, XV. 32. Suet., Ner., 12. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXI. 9, 17.

[65] This was the so-called persecution of the Christians. A. D. 64 - 66. Tac., Ann., XV. 44.

construction of a palace extending over the greater portion of the charred and blood-stained capital.[66] Weary of the submission that was seldom[67] interrupted at home, Nero travelled to Greece to triumph at the Olympic games. Worn out with the homage attending his progress, he returned to demand still profounder worship from the Romans.[68] They had already confessed him to be Nero the divine.[69] "I deserved it," said the greatest general of the time, on receiving sentence of death from Nero.[70] He meant that he deserved to die for having submitted to such a master, or to those by whom such a one was supported. Other swords were drawn against the powers that were. Nero had then reigned fourteen years.[71]

Servius Sulpicius Galba, a man of age, rank and fortune, proclaimed by an army in Gaul, was afterwards accepted by the Prætorians. Seven months had barely elapsed when Galba was slain by the troops at Rome.[72] Marcus Salvius Otho, a younger and more showy personage, vaulted into the imperial throne. Another claimant to it had appeared while Galba was alive. This was Aulus Vitellius, declared by two armies in Germany, and

[66] "Usus est patriæ ruinis, extruxitque domum . . . . In illa invisa et spoliis civium extructa domo, ... urbis quæ domui supererant." Tac., Ann., xv. 42, 43, 52. Suet., Ner., 31, 39.

[67] The exception of the conspiracy, in which Seneca and the poet Lucan took part under the lead of Calpurnius Piso, is scarcely an exception. Tac., Ann , xv. 48 *et seq.* Suetonius (Ner., 36) mentions another conspiracy at Beneventum.

[68] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIII. 14 *et seq.*

[69] Tac., Ann., xv. 74.

[70] This was Domitius Corbulo. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIII. 17.

[71] A. D. 54 – 68. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIII. 26 – 29.

[72] Id., ib., LXIV. 6. Tac., Hist , I. 25 *et seq.*, 41.

then acknowledged by all the western provinces, that is, by all the legions quartered in them.[73] After various encounters between the troops supporting Otho and those supporting Vitellius, the latter triumphed.[74]

A fresh strife was brewing in the East. Flavius Sabinus Vespasianus, the commander of the army employed in the Jewish province, was proclaimed by the troops then stationed in Egypt.[75] The legions in Judea, Syria, and Illyria accepted him as their sovereign.[76] His generals immediately marched upon Italy. Vitellius fell eight months after the fall of his predecessor.[77] "Miserable the Empire," exclaimed the historian, "that had endured such changing and disgraceful fortunes, until other men rather than other measures prevailed!"[78]

In the midst of these contests there appeared one man above being made an Emperor. When the legions in Gaul, as has been related, declared for Galba, the troops in Germany under the command of Verginius Rufus, proffered their allegiance to their own general. Of his earlier years nothing is recorded[79] that explains the magnanimity with which he now not only peremptorily rejected the offer of

[73] Tac., Hist., I. 51 *et seq.*

[74] Id., ib, II. 46–49. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIV. 13–15.

[75] Tac., Hist., II. 79.

[76] Id., ib, II. 79, 85, 86.

[77] Id., ib, III. 86, IV. 2, 3. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVI. 1. This, being in December, 69, was but a year and a half from the overthrow of Nero. Upon this stormy time, see the biographies of Suetonius as well as the authorities above cited.

[78] "Magna et misera civitas, eodem anno Othonem Vitelliumque passa, inter Vinios, Fabios, Icelos, Asiaticos, varia et pudenda sorte agebat; donec successere Mucianus et Marcellus, et magis alii homines, quam alii mores." Tac, Hist., II. 95.

[79] "Equestri familia, ignoto patre." Id., ib., I. 52.

his soldiers, but as unhesitatingly announced his determination to acknowledge no other sovereign than him whom the Senate should confirm in the room of Nero. Nor did his spirit evaporate in words. Leading his troops forthwith into Gaul, Verginius there encountered the army which was supporting Galba without any reference to the will of the other legions, much less to that of the Senate.[80] The victory of Verginius was complete, and again his soldiers presssed him to accept the imperial authority, which he again refused.[81] Galba, being at length recognised by the Senate, prevailed upon Verginius to accompany him to Rome. There, however, he was suffered to remain unnoticed by the court, but not unhonored by the better class of its subjects,[82] until Otho appointed him to the shadowy distinction of the consulate. On Otho's death, the troops once more insisted upon raising Verginius to the throne. For the third time he withstood them, though menaces of death were now mingled with their acclamations.[83] His constancy was more than the soldiers of the Empire could bear. During the brief reign of Vitellius, an accusation of treason was urged against Verginius most loudly by the very troops who had besought him to become their sove-

[80] Plut , Galb., 6. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIII. 24.

[81] Tac., Hist., I. 52. Plut., Galb., 6. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIII. 25.

[82] "And greater was his name amongst them," says Dion, "than if he had accepted the sovereignty, for not having desired it." Ap. Xiph., LXIV. 4.

"I would rather hide me from my greatness . . . .
Than in my greatness covet to be hid,
And in the vapor of my glory smothered."
Richard II.

[83] Tac , Hist , II. 49, 51.

reign.[84] Escaping their hostilities, as he had already avoided their importunities, he lived to a great old age, worthy of the epitaph which he wrote for himself, that he had sustained the authority of his country, not his own.[85]

The imperial power, in passing from the family of the Cæsars, had been obtained by men of illustrious descent, until Vespasian was raised to the throne. His elevation, still more the hereditary succession of his two sons, Titus and Domitian, were additional proofs of the humiliation wrought amongst the Romans. At those who would have proved the antiquity of his race, the low-born Vespasian laughed aloud.[86] His reign lasted ten years.[87] Titus reigned but little more than two years.[88] The comparative mildness of their government[89] made it all the more grievous for their subjects to bear with the downright despotism of Domitian. The fifteen years[90] during which he held the sway are black with horror.[91]

The most illustrious name of the period is that of

[84] Tac., Hist., II. 68.

[85] "Hic situs est Rufus, pulso qui Vindice quondam
Imperium adseruit non sibi sed patriæ."
Ap. Plin., Ep., VI. 10, or IX. 19. He died A. D. 97, at the age of eighty-three. "Triginta annis," writes Pliny (Ep., II. 1), "gloriæ suæ supervixit."

[86] Suet., Vesp., 12

[87] A. D. 69–79.

[88] A. D. 79–81.

[89] "Passa [respublica] deinceps tot Nerones per Vespasianum caput extulit." Vopisc., Carus etc., 3.

The praise of Titus is still more sonorous. "Neque vitio ullo reperto," says Suetonius, Tit., 7, "et contra virtutibus summis."

It is in reference to these two and to the shortness of their reigns that Ausonius (Tetrast., XII.) says:

"Vix tanti est habuisse illos, quia dona bonorum
Sunt brevia."

[90] A. D. 81–96.

[91] Dion Cassius (ap. Xiph., LXVII. 8, 9, 12, 13) supplies more than sufficient instances.

Cnæus Julius Agricola. Highly born and liberally educated in the southern province of Gaul, he was introduced at an early age into the upper ranks at Rome. His services, both here and in the provinces, brilliant as they were,[92] were outshone by the attachments and virtues of his domestic life. "You would give him," says his biographer and son-in-law, "the praise of being a good man."[93] His mother, "a woman of rare chastity,"[94] watched over his youth, restraining him alike from the dangers of excessive study, and the much greater dangers of excessive dissipation. The wife whom he afterwards espoused was of equally elevated character. In an age when marriage was used as a warrant for licentiousness, Domitia and Agricola kept it as a bond of faithful love.[95] Children were born. Over them the father, unlike men around him, was not ashamed to watch while they lived, or to mourn with parental affection when they were taken away.[96] Such private virtue was as insufficient as his public fame to protect Agricola against the displeasure and the violence of Domitian. He died by poison, as was reported, in his fifty-seventh year,[97] happy, remarks his son-in-law, "in having escaped that season when a sovereign was, as it were with one blow, despatching the Commonwealth."[98] "Had it been

[92] See Tac., Agric. Vit., 5 *et seq.*

[93] "Bonum virum facile crederes." Id., ib., 44.

[94] Id., ib., 4.

[95] "Idque matrimonium ad majora nitenti decus ac robur fuit: vixeruntque mira concordia, per mutuam caritatem, et invicem se anteponendo." Id., ib., 6.

[96] Id., ib., 28.

[97] A. D. 93. Tac., Agric. Vit., 43. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVI 20.

[98] Tac., Agric. Vit., 44.

in our power," continues the mourner, "to forget as well as to be silent, we should have parted not only with our voices, but with our very memories." [99]

Yet there were voices that never faltered in adulation of the sovereign. Whether it were to extol his intellect [100] or his valor,[101] or to swell the volume to which his power might seem increasing,[102] neither the verses of poets, as they styled themselves, nor the paragraphs of rhetoricians failed. It was not until after the death of Domitian that Juvenal dared to speak of the evils which had appeared. The only difficulty when his tongue once loosed itself, was to keep the expression of his disdain within reasonable bounds.[103] "Though nature," he writes, "were to deny me the power of composing verses, mere indignation would create them while probity is suffering and wealth is the reward of wickedness." [104] "If the heroes of old," exclaims the satirist, "still live amongst the shades, if Curius and the Scipios and the youth who fell at Cannæ are below to receive the wanderers thither, what will they think of us?" [105] Then he argues that the name of glory is a vanity proved amongst all generations.[106] Then, again, he scales the heights of the heavens themselves, to face with weak effrontery the indolent and powerless immortals.[107]

[99] Tac., Agric. Vit., 2.

[100] Quintil., Inst. Orat., x. 1. 91, 92.

[101] Silius Italicus, III. 607 *et seq.* Statius, Theb., I. 30, 31, or Sylv., IV. 2. 14 - 16.

[102] Mart., V. 19, VII. 8 etc. etc.

[103] "Difficile est satiram non scribere." *Sat.*, I. 30.

[104] Ib., I. 74 - 80.

[105] Ib., II. 153 *et seq.*

[106] Sat., X. 114 *et seq.*
"Has toties optata exegit gloria pœnas."
Ib., 187.

[107] "Dic mihi, quæso, dic, antiquissime Divum,
Respondes his, Jane pater? Magna otia cœli:
Non est, ut video, non est quod agatur apud vos."
Ib., VI. 393 - 395.

The testimony of Juvenal is corroborated by Caius Cornelius Tacitus the historian. He writes of sovereigns around whose towering forms are grouped the still more towering figures of their courtiers and soldiers. No want of sympathy is shown for the few who seek to lift themselves above humiliation. But the prostration of the masses is described in language which shows the frustration to which the exertions of individuals were inevitably doomed. The historian can but jeer at the Romans. "Their only care," he says, "is to see that the market is full."[108] He calls them "unstable and timid,"[109] charges them with "credulity,"[110] "suspiciousness,"[111] "deceitfulness,"[112] and "proneness to degradation."[113] "Without a master," he says, in the very face of the evil wrought by the the imperial power, "they are headlong, cowardly and dull."[114] From such there could be few to rise.

Domitian was murdered by three of his officers.[115] They had been encouraged to the deed by an aged Senator, Marcus Cocceius Nerva, who was proclaimed Emperor.[116] "It is bad enough," said one of the Consuls, "to have a sovereign under whom no one

[108] "Vulgus, alimenta in dies mercari solitum, cui una ex republica annonæ cura" Hist., IV. 38.

[109] "Populo ut est novarum rerum cupiens pavidusque." Ann., XV. 46.

[110] "Vulgus credulum." Hist., IV. 49.

[111] "Municipale vulgus, pronum ad suspiciones." Ib., II. 21.

[112] "Vulgus fingendi avidum" Ib., II. 1.

[113] "Ut est vulgus ad deteriora promptum." Ann., XV. 64.

[114] "Ut est vulgus sine rectore præceps, pavidum, secors." Hist., IV. 37.

[115] Suet., Dom., 23. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVII. 17.

[116] A. D. 96. He lived until 98. Id., ib., LXVIII. 4.

can do anything. But it is worse to have a sovereign under whom any one can do everything."[117] Obliged to take to himself a colleague, Nerva selected Marcus Ulpius Trajanus, a native of Italica in Spain.[118] The subjection of Rome to a master of provincial birth completed her humiliation.[119]

The absence of liberty in the mistress city is proved by the preceding narrations. Such as essayed to gain anything fit to be called freedom, perished like Cordus or Agricola. Only those who armed themselves in the camps or thrust themselves into the courts of successive reigns attained even the semblance of freedom. It was but the semblance. The courtier had no security against oppression beneath his fellow-courtiers. The soldier had none against oppression beneath his fellow-soldiers. The liberty which men like Macro or Vespasian succeeded in achieving was the liberty to rule. Others who failed in their attempts to gain it were likewise seeking but to be rulers.

Once a year the Roman streets resounded with the outcries of freedom.[120] Day after day, the slaves of the city, wearing the badges and clothes of freemen, paraded themselves with "howls and

[117] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVIII. 1. "Nunc demum," writes Tacitus in a contrary opinion, "redit animus: et quanquam primo statim beatissimi sæculi ortu, Nerva Cæsar res olim dissociabiles miscuerit, principatum ac libertatem." Agric. Vit., 3.

[118] A. D. 97. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVIII. 3. Plin., Pan., 6.

[119] He came to Rome in 99. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVIII. 5. "Hactenus," says Aurelius Victor, "Romæ seu per Italiam orti imperium rexere: hinc advenæ." De Cæs., XI. 12.

[120] "Libertate Decembri." Hor., II. Sat., VII. 4.

tumults," says the contemporary writer, "which you could not have borne."[121] It was the festival of the Saturnalia.[122] In the wild and reckless orgies to which it was devoted, the shade of ancient liberty revisited the enslaved and the fallen. They returned to their senses, to the cares and the services of daily life, without either the expectation or the desire of encountering liberty.

[121] Plut., Viv. Sec. Epic., tom. x. p. 517.

[122] See Dezobry, Rome au Siècle d'Auguste, Lettre LXXI.

CHAPTER III.

HUMILIATION IN THE PROVINCES.

"Domitæ . . . . maximæ nationes, sed nondum legibus, nondum jure certo, nondum satis firma pace devinctæ." — CICERO, *De Prov. Cons.*, 8.

THE description of the different classes at Rome applies, in a great degree, to those of the provinces. Similar divisions between the bond and the free, the rich and the poor, the subject and the citizen, existed throughout the imperial realms. But there was this difference between the condition of the provincials and that of the Romans. The latter were humbled. The former, in being subject to the latter, were doubly humbled. Was it possible for the inhabitants of the provinces to recover from their twofold humiliation?

Their inferiority was as clear as day. When they turned their eyes to the Romans, they looked as towards masters. When the Romans looked towards them, it was as towards slaves. It was from the provinces that the chief resources of the imperial government were derived. The enormous revenues[1]

[1] The amount is not to be exactly estimated. Vespasian the Emperor, after a period of civil war, and therefore of enormous expenditure, said that there was need of "quadringenties millies,"

requisite to maintain the army, the court and the sovereign, with all their dependent functionaries, could come from no other source as a general rule than from the provinces.[2] Motives of interest sometimes led the Romans and their rulers to consult the good of the provincials.[3] Motives of humanity more rarely induced the individual to plead in their behalf.[4] But the tone usually employed towards them was that of superiors towards those deemed greatly their inferiors. The historian of the period professes to give an account of the provinces. It turns out to be an enumeration of the quarters and the commanders assigned to the legions by whom the provincials were held.[5] The provinces themselves, their territory and population, appear to have been slighted as beneath consideration. It was so with the historian's contemporaries at Rome. They passed over the provincials as their subjects, to dwell upon the legions who were their rulers as well as the rulers of the provincials.

The provinces between the Ionian sea and the Euphrates were generally too much habituated to oppression to be sensitive under the Roman dominion. In yielding to the warriors of the West,

"ut Respublica stare posset." Suet., Vesp., 16. This was at least 1,200,000,000 dollars! The ordinary revenue may have been a quarter part of this sum.

[2] A portion of a decree by the Præfect of Egypt under Galba describes the hardships of the provincials. It is given in Sharpe's Egypt under the Romans, p. 45.

[3] See the citations of Beaufort, Republ. Rom., tom. v. pp. 99–101. Eutropius, (VII. 5) describes the measures of Augustus.

[4] As Thrasea Pætus did. Tac., Ann., XV. 20, 21.

[5] Tac, Hist., I. 8 *et seq.* So in Hist., III. 44, the legion is again treated as the province.

the Eastern races had submitted but to the victors of their former conquerors. It was no new conquest from which they suffered. It was to no liberty lately lost that they could aspire.

Of the nations once existing where the Roman provinces now extended, the Greeks had been the freest. They were at present the most enslaved. "We have just as much liberty," writes the philosopher Plutarch, "as our Emperors choose to give us. It is better, perchance, than if we had more."[6] The names of the ancient institutions still lingered. "But those," says Plutarch, "who obtain office in Greece, are not to flatter themselves with the idea that they have the authority of Pericles. . . . . They must don a humble garment, nor trust overmuch in the crown which they wear when they see the shoes of the Roman above their heads."[7] The advice of the philosopher was hardly needed. The Roman historian remarks upon the grandeur of the spectacle, when the Senate was permitted by the Emperor Tiberius to receive certain embassies from several of the Grecian cities. Doubtless there was much to admire in the showy trains and splendid offerings of the ambassadors. But the demands presented by them related not to the substance which they had lost, but to the forms which they still retained.[8] The favors voluntarily bestowed upon the Greeks prove the prostration of the race.

[6] Plut., Reip. Ger. Præc., tom. IX. p. 278.

[7] Id., ib., p. 274.

[8] Tac., Ann., III. 60 *et seq.* The demands related to certain rights of asylum.

Claudius released the inhabitants of Cos from paying tribute, only because his physician, a native of the island, had asked the boon.[9] On a larger scale, Nero declared the whole nation of the Greeks to be free after he had been declared victor at the Olympic games.[10]

One people formed an exception to the general humiliation of the East. Dispersed as they were, the Jews still clung in persecution and in separation to the laws of their ancestors. The land which they still called their country,[11] after being repeatedly conquered by other powers, had been drawn into the Roman realms about a third of a century before the establishment of the empire. A line of princes, deriving their authority from the conquerors, by whose governors they were at times displaced,[12] succeeded to the elder rulers. The High Priest still presided over the Sanhedrim, the council in which, together with its subordinate tribunals, considerable authority continued to be vested. But the nation at large in its settlements, beyond as well as within the Jewish province, cherished an undying attach-

[9] Tac., Ann., XII. 61.

[10] Pausanias, VII. 17. Plut., Flam., 12. The grant was retracted by Vespasian. Suet., Vesp., 8.

[11] "That being their metropolis," says Philo, (Adv. Flacc., p. 524,) "which contains the Holy Temple of the Most High." So De Virt., p. 587.

[12] Pompey conquered Judea in A. C. 63. Joseph., Bell. Jud., I. 6–8. Tac, Hist., V. 9. The famous Herod reigned from A. C. 37 to 4. His kingdom was at first divided amongst his three sons. Joseph., Ant., XVII. 11. 4. Thirteen Roman governors ruled Judea from A. D. 6 to 66; but from 41 to 44, royalty was revived for the benefit of Herod Agrippa, the grandson of the elder Herod. Id., ib., XVII. 13, XVIII. 4. 6, 6. 10, 7. 2, XIX. 5. 1. Some time after his death, his son obtained the same title. Id., ib., XX. 5. 2, 7. 1, 8. 4.

ment to its ancient institutions. More despised at Rome than any other of the subject races and more frequently outraged, not only in Rome [13] or in Judea, but throughout the Empire, [14] the Jews were nevertheless the most united and the most independent of the provincials.

Nowhere was the Jewish population more numerous, proportionately, than at Alexandria. Nowhere were its sufferings more intolerable. [15] Oppressed by the Præfect as well as by the Alexandrians themselves, the Jews resolved upon appealing to the Emperor. Caius was then reigning. Instead of being received as the representatives of an afflicted people, the envoys found themselves charged with neglecting to worship their sovereign or even to erect his statues in their temples. [16] To the defence which they would have attempted, Caius refused to listen; and while they hesitated upon the course to be pursued, it was announced to them that the Emperor had commanded his image to be placed in the synagogues of Alexandria as of other cities, nay, in the very temple at Jerusalem. All thought of obtaining redress for the injuries which had occasioned their embassy disappeared from amongst the Alexandrian envoys. Their whole energies, to-

[13] The Trasteverini of their day. Philo, De Virt., p. 568. They were twice expelled under Tiberius, and once under Claudius. Suet., Tib., 36, Claud., 25; Tac., Ann., II. 85; Jos., Ant., XVIII. 3. 5; Phil., De Virt., p. 569; Oros., VII. 6.

[14] "Everywhere men turn against them." Philo, De Virt., p. 569. "Sceleratissimæ gentis" is the mild expression of Seneca, ap. August., Civ. Dei, VI. 11. See Tac., Hist., V. 5, or Juvenal, Sat., III. 13 *et seq.*; VI. 542 *et seq.*

[15] Philo, Adv. Flacc., pp. 525 *et seq.*, De Virt., pp. 563 *et seq.* Or Philostratus, Vit. Apoll., Tyan., V. 33.

[16] Joseph., Ant., XVIII. 8. 1.

gether with those of their countrymen at Rome, were directed to avert the pollution of their sanctuaries. Persuaded, chiefly by the remonstrances of the Jewish prince Agrippa, Caius the Emperor suspended the execution of his commands.[17]

About twenty-five years afterwards, and during the reign of Nero, the Jewish province broke out in rebellion.[18] But it was a divided as well as a disordered people that armed itself against its oppressors. "I used my endeavors," says Josephus, a Jew of high rank, who had lately returned from sojourning at Rome, "to repress this insurrectionary spirit, and to induce a better feeling."[19] Not the less general was the insurrection. Indeed it but increased the resolution of the mass, to find that they were to contend against their domestic as well as against their foreign oppressors. The most prominent leaders were John of Giscala and Eleazar, who took the lead of different parties amongst the Zealots, as the most zealous of the insurgents were denominated. Simon, the son of Gioras, appeared in command of the Idumean subsidies at the siege of Jerusalem.

This siege was the inevitable termination of a rebellion so coldly discountenanced on the one side, so madly pursued on the other. Jerusalem, and the six hundred thousand human beings within its walls, stood grim against the Roman armies.[20] Nor did

[17] A. D. 38–41. The embassy started in the winter of 39–40. Philo, who was at the head of the embassy, relates its adventures and perplexities. De Virt., pp. 573 to 600. See, also, Joseph., Ant., XVIII. 8. 7, 8.

[18] A. D. 66.

[19] Life, IV. Traill's translation.

[20] Tac., Hist., V. 13.

the defenders of the city yield until after five months[21] of horror, deepened by famine and fire as well as slaughter. Nearly a million and a half of lives had been sacrificed from the beginning of the insurrection to the victory of Titus, afterwards the Emperor, at Jerusalem.[22] Yet the conqueror could not spare the survivors of the conquered. Two thousand five hundred Jews fell fighting with wild beasts or with one another at Cæsarea.[23] The number of those transported to the amphitheatres and the imperial works of Rome, with those sold into slavery elsewhere, amounted to one hundred thousand.[24] At the same time the command went forth to exterminate the race imagining itself entitled to Jewish royalty.[25] A tribute was laid upon all spared from death and bondage, while their land, Judea itself, was publicly sold.[26] Vespasian, by whom the war on the part of Rome was begun, and his son Titus, by whom the war was ended, triumphed together at the capital. There, too, they employed the spoils of the vanquished in erecting a temple to Peace. Josephus, "after bearing his part," he said, "so long as there was any possibility of resistance,"[27] returned to profit by the

[21] April to September, 70. The temple fell in August.

[22] Lipsius, after Josephus, in Milman's Hist. of the Jews, Book xvi. "It is a story," says Isidore of Pelusium, "such as time hath never seen." Ep., iv. 75.

[23] Joseph., Bell. Jud., vii. 3. 1. The Babylonian Talmud preserves the tradition of other outrages committed by the "impious Titus," as he is called. See Lardner's Jewish Testimonies, p. 159; and compare the later account of Josippon, p. 184.

[24] Lipsius, ut supra.

[25] This was the posterity of David. Eus., iii. 12.

[26] Joseph., Bell. Jud., vii. 6. 6. The last place to yield was Masada, in A. D. 71. Id., ib., vii. 8, 9.

[27] Contra Apionem, i. 9. See his Life, lxxv. lxxvi. He died in

bounties of the imperial court. He was still the representative of a large number amongst his nation. The still larger number that had died for freedom left no immediate representatives behind them.

The East recedes as we look along the southern shore of the Mediterranean. From Egypt westward, the northern edge of Africa was inhabited by a population of much the same description as that noticeable amongst the Eastern races. But the spirit of the Western races shows itself more decidedly in the interior settlements, especially in those contiguous to the African mountains.

The Roman historian describes Tacfarinas of Numidia as a deserter and a brigand. He had certainly served amongst the auxiliary legions; and on abandoning that service, he had certainly appeared at the head of a few armed followers, whom he led in wild forays throughout the Numidian province. But he was soon acknowledged as chieftain of the Musulani, a rude but formidable tribe of Numidia; and to them were presently joined the neighboring Mauri, or Moors, of Mauretania.[28] The leader of such an insurrection deserves some better epithets than those scornfully lavished upon him at Rome. Choosing his men from a crowd of volunteers, and arming them after the Roman manner, Tacfarinas kept them in camp until they could be partially disciplined. Such as were unsuited to any

Rome, where he was invested with citizenship, about A. D. 100.

[28] A. D. 17. Tac., Ann., II. 52.

sort of confinement or instruction, he gave over to the Moor Mazippa, who led them in marauding parties through the surrounding country. A third tribe of very considerable importance, the Cinthii, united in the revolt. So warm were the hopes of the leader or the passions of the followers, that battle with the Roman forces was not declined. The Numidians and their allies, not yet prepared for such encounters, were easily routed; and Tacfarinas, for the moment, disappeared.

He did not despair. Waiting his time, and gathering all whom he could persuade to arms, the Numidian broke forth from his concealment, some two years afterwards. Unable, for want of followers, to renew the efforts which he had made in the earlier insurrection, Tacfarinas hurried from place to place, defeating a Roman cohort, and collecting a large quantity of spoils.[29] So much apprehension did he excite at Rome, that the Emperor Tiberius sent a formal message to the Senate, calling their attention to the African rebellion, and asking the appointment of a general to whom its suppression might be safely committed. The Senate very becomingly requested the Emperor to make his own election; and he, quite as becomingly, appointed the uncle of the reigning Præfect, the Prætorian Sejanus.[30] Meanwhile, the Numidian chieftain, having made an incursion far into the African territories, whence he returned with reinforcements at the end of a year,

[29] A. D. 20. Tac., Ann., III. 20, 21.

[30] Id., ib., III. 32. "'Dare id se' dixit [Tiberius] 'honori Sejani,' cujus ille avunculus erat." Id., ib., 72.

despatched an embassy to the Emperor. "Either," he claimed, "give us a spot where we can dwell in peace, or prepare for an interminable war."[31]

The Proconsul of Africa straightway received orders from Rome to pardon all the insurgents who should abandon their leader, while he was to be taken captive without delay. A large number accepted the amnesty; but so many remained faithful to the Numidian hero, that the campaign was long protracted before any pretext could be obtained by the Proconsul for assuming the title of victor.[32] A statue to the so-styled conqueror was presently erected at Rome beside the images of two other generals previously declared victorious in Africa.[33] Thrice, therefore, had the Romans or their rulers exulted over the discomfiture of the Numidian. It does not seem as if he had been despised.

About eighteen months later, and seven years from the beginning of the war, Tacfarinas re-appeared.[34] His enemies called it his fourth foray. But there is nothing to show that he had ever actually laid aside his arms after once declaring against the imperial oppression. He now had under his command a more numerous host, in which his former allies, the Moors, enrolled themselves, notwithstanding the adhesion of their king to the Roman cause. Other tribes, not prominently engaged in the earlier movements, were likewise roused to greater activity. Stronger still in hopes than in

[31] It was now A. D. 22. Tac., Ann., III. 73.
[32] Id., ib., III. 74.
[33] Id., ib., IV. 23.
[34] A. D. 24. Id., ib.

numbers, the Numidian once more assumed the aggressive. A proclamation was issued, calling upon all "who preferred liberty to bondage" to unite in the attempt "to expel the Roman power from its hold on Africa."[35] The siege of an important city near the coast was immediately undertaken by the wary chieftain, who had felt the want of some stronghold in all his previous campaigns. But just as the prospect was brightest, the clouds swept over it from Rome. The siege that had been carefully begun was necessarily raised on the approach of a proconsular army; while the leaders of the Musulani, the earliest confederates whom Tacfarinas had obtained, fell into the hands of the enemy, and were suddenly massacred. Retreating some miles before his foes, Tacfarinas halted in the midst of dense forests, near a fortress which he had dismantled during one of his numerous expeditions. Thither the Roman forces marched so hastily as to take the Africans completely by surprise. An action followed, more like the capture and the slaughter of cattle, says the historian, than a battle with men. In the midst of his dying comrades fell Tacfarinas, disdaining submission to the last. His son was made prisoner; and the surviving confederates, bereft of the only real leader that they had found, returned to their humiliation under the Empire.[36]

[35] This is the most trustworthy statement of his cause. "Rem Romanam aliis quoque ab nationibus lacerari, eoque paullatim Africa decedere, ac posse reliquos circumveniri, si cuncti, quibus libertas servitio potior, incubuissent." Tac., Ann., iv. 24.

[36] "Isque finis armis impositus." Tac., Ann., iv. 25. Aure-

"Like night, from land to land," the humiliation of the provinces extended. In some countries, as in Spain, the resistance to the Roman arms had lasted too long and ended too fearfully to be renewed. Other races, defeated though they were, retained a freshness of spirit that promised a revival, however partial, of their independence. Throughout the northwestern provinces especially, the restlessness under losses and subjugation was not yet stayed. The conquerors to whom the inhabitants of those regions first yielded were those whom Rome had sent against them. Memories of warfare and freedom, not so ancient as to be merely traditional, entered into the daily thoughts of men thus kept alive to oppression and prompt to resentment. It went hard with many of the Gallic and German provincials to adapt themselves to existing circumstances. If poor, they found it difficult to face the tax-gatherer. If brave, they held it hateful to enlist in the legions. Even when effeminate and opulent, they were vexed by their inability to vie with the same class of Romans. These, in themselves, were the same trials that befel the races of the southern and the eastern provinces. But the western and the northern races, less accustomed to subjection, found the grievances which it entailed more painful to endure.

Not many years after Tiberius began to reign, a revolt broke out in the centre and the north of Gaul.

lius Victor (Cæs., II. 3), despatches the whole history in eight words: "Compressa Getulorum latrocinia, quæ Tacfarinate duce passim proruperant."

The chief complaint of the insurgents related to the magnitude of their debts, brought upon them, as they declared, by insupportable taxation and severity.[37] Yet the leaders of the insurrection were of a class the least likely to be afflicted, that which had received the grant of Roman citizenship. Julius Florus, a Trevir, and Julius Sacrovir, an Æduan, both of noble birth, but both apparently involved in the embarrassments or the oppressions which burdened their countrymen, sounded the summons to rebellion.

Scarce any people, confesses the historian, but was stirred. "The time has come," declared the leaders, "for recovering our liberty. Italy is desolate. The people at Rome are wholly unwarlike; and no part of the army has any strength except that derived from provincial or foreign recruits."[38] Florus, who went amongst the northern Gauls, soon gathered a considerable force of "debtors and dependents," as their enemies were pleased to call them. His endeavors to win over the imperial cavalry that had been enlisted amongst his countrymen were not altogether unsuccessful. But the imperfect organization of the main body whom he led obliged him to retreat before the pursuing legions into the forest of Ardennes. There the disciplined soldiery prevailed against the undisciplined insurgents; and Florus

[37] A. D. 21. "Ob magnitudinem æris alieni .... Disserebant de continuatione tributorum, gravitate fenoris, sævitia ac superbia præsidentium." Tac., Ann., III. 40.

[38] "Nihil validum in exercitibus, nisi quod externum." Id., ib., III. 40.

himself, finding escape impossible, fell by his own hand.[39]

Meantime Sacrovir had busied himself in rousing the Gauls of the Centre and the West. The first to declare themselves were two tribes upon the Loire; but so little were their confederates prepared, that Sacrovir, with others of the Gallic leaders, joined the Roman forces in suppressing the premature rebellion.[40] It was an evil omen. But as soon as the principal insurgents had completed their measures, they took the field with unimpaired ardor. The Æduans, to whom Sacrovir belonged, and their neighbors in Central Gaul, were people of greater resources as well as of more eager desires than their colder and ruder countrymen of the North. With the forces raised and disciplined amongst his adherents, Sacrovir was soon the master of Augustodunum, the capital of the Æduan territory. Hither the young men of the chief families in Gaul were sent to receive their education as subjects of the Empire.[41] Sacrovir found no trouble in persuading them to embrace the national cause; and their enthusiasm in joining him was probably imitated by many of their kindred. The force under the Æduan leader numbered more than fifty thousand, of whom, however, but a fifth part was equipped after the Roman manner; the remainder being provided with the weapons of huntsmen or gladiators. Many partisans from the adjoining districts, where rebellion

[39] Tac., Ann., III. 40, 42.
[40] Id., ib., 41.
[41] "Nobilissimam Galliarum sobolem," says the Roman, "liberalibus studiis ibi operatam." Id., ib., 43.

was not yet openly proclaimed, came in from time to time to swell the host at Augustodunum. The rumor reached Rome that sixty-four different tribes in Gaul had taken up arms, and that their fellow-subjects in Spain and in Germany were preparing to do likewise.[42]

The imperial legions were speedily directed against Augustodunum. Twelve miles from the city they encountered the insurgent forces, drawn up in an uncovered situation, but disposed with considerable skill. Sacrovir was conspicuous in the line; and his voice was heard exhorting his followers to remember "the ancient glory of Gaul, and the liberty which they would gain by present victory."[43] But the battle was soon ended. Sacrovir, flying with some faithful friends to Augustodunum, and thence to a neighboring villa, slew himself, while the survivors fell by one another's hands. The quickness of the leaders to despair argues but little fitness in themselves or in their followers to be free. Yet, as Sacrovir had forewarned his comrades upon the fatal field in which they were defeated, "servitude would be far more intolerable to those who were vanquished in the attempt to recover their liberty."[44]

A half century passed. The war-cries of Sacrovir and Florus had died away amidst the submission

[42] Tac., Ann., III. 44.

[43] "Memorare veteres Gallorum glorias, quæque Romanis adversa intulissent: quam decora victoribus libertas: quanto intoleratior servitus iterum victis." Id., ib., III. 45.

[44] As above. The defeat of the confederates, and the exultation produced at Rome are described in Tac., Ann., III. 46, 47. The rebellion was remembered by the name of its leader. "Sacroviriani belli," says Tacitus, Ann., IV. 18.

of the tribes in Gaul, from the southern to the northern shores. Many of the races once driven to arms by the approach of a Roman legion were now contented to see their most valiant men enlisting in the imperial armies. The wars upon the northern frontier, to which future reference will be made, were fought by troops chiefly levied amongst settlements where the dominion of Rome had long been successfully resisted. One of the warlike tribes from whom the imperial generals most frequently recruited their forces was the Batavian. It was the boast of the nation, that there had been no tribute demanded from them "but that of valor and of warriors."[45] Even they at length found motives to rebellion.

The officers appointed one year to hold a levy amongst the Batavians were guilty of shocking cruelties.[46] These, perhaps, would have been endured, but for the passions that had already been excited in Julius Claudius Civilis, the chief[47] of the Batavian nation. Many years[48] had elapsed since he enlisted amongst the imperial troops, and obtained the appellation by which alone he is called in the Roman history. As Julius Claudius, he was made a namesake of his sovereigns; while the additional

[45] "Sibi non tributa, sed virtutem et viros indici." Tac., Hist., v. 25. "Harum gentium virtute præcipui Batavi . . . . Nec tributis contemnuntur, nec publicanus adterit: exempti oneribus et collationibus, et tantum in usum præliorum sepositi, velut tela atque arma, bellis reservantur." Id., Germ., 29.

[46] A. D. 69. Tac., Hist., IV. 14.

[47] "Regia stirpe." Id., ib., 13.

[48] "Per quinque et viginti annos in castris Romanis." Id., ib., 32. He would, therefore, be about forty-five years old at the time of the rebellion.

epithet of Civilis, or the citizen, was probably bestowed upon him as the mark of his adoption amongst his fellow-subjects. The attempt, if it was made, to change the Batavian warrior into the Roman soldier completely failed. Towards the close of Nero's reign, he was transported in chains to Rome, on the charge of sedition, while his brother was put to death. Brought back to the quarters of the northern army, the Batavian again incurred suspicion.[49] At the time of the levy just mentioned, he was ripe for revenging himself and his nation.

Calling the most eminent of his tribe around him, he met them by night in a consecrated forest. Beneath old trees, lit up by flashing torches, the Batavian began to speak of the renown of his race and of the injuries which it had experienced in servitude. "Look ye," he cried, "and have no fear for the empty names of the legions. The flower of the infantry and of the cavalry belongs to you. The Germans are your kinsmen. The Gauls are of the same mind. Nay, not all the Romans will condemn a war in which we can profess to uphold one of their rival Emperors."[50] It needed few words of this nature to rouse the echoes of the forest, as the Batavians swore revenge with imprecations and religious ceremonies. Civilis, no longer the citizen of the Empire, but the champion of the northern na-

[49] Tac., Hist., IV. 13. "Necem fratris," he is represented as saying, (Id., ib., 32,) "et vincula mea, et sævissimas hujus exercitus voces, quibus ad supplicium petitus, jure gentium pœnas reposco."

[50] Naming Vespasian. Tac., Hist., IV. 14. Josephus alludes to the civil wars as great inducements to rebellion. Bell. Jud., VII. 4. 2.

tions, bound himself by a vow to go unshorn until the Romans were humbled.[51]

The Batavian territory, between the mouths of the Rhine and the Meuse, with Gaul on the one side and Germany on the other, seemed the very place in which to strike the spark of rebellion. Nor did it fail to spread through many of the nearest districts, especially on the German frontier, where motives to warfare were much the same as those of the Batavians and their nearer allies. Nothing, however, contributed more to the first successes of the confederates than the defection of their countrymen from the imperial armies. In vain did the legions strive to hold their posts or to retain their numbers against the general resolution of their northern recruits to fight for their own independence rather than for the oppression of the Empire.[52] Neither was it possible for the armies, mostly under the command of the partisans of Vespasian, to act with any immediate effect against the insurgents who professed to uphold the authority of that Emperor. The spread, therefore, of the insurrection was wide and formidable.

So alarming, indeed, was its progress, that the Romans imagined its leader to be endeavoring to make himself king of all the northwestern provinces.[53] Civilis had doubtless set his heart upon combining the resources of these great territories in one united league against the Roman

Tac., Hist., IV. 15, 61. The taunt about his imitation of Hannibal or Sertorius, sounds more like praise to our ears. Id., ib., IV. 13.

[52] Id., ib., IV. 16, 18–20.

[53] Id., ib., 18.

dominion. "If Gaul will but throw off the yoke," he urged its people, "how much will there remain for Italy to rule? One province, now, is held by the help of another. . . . . Let the Orient, accustomed to monarchs, continue in subjection. But Gaul has many an inhabitant born before the tyrannies of the Empire, and Germany has already repulsed the threats of servitude."[54] But the vaster the designs of the Batavian, the greater were his difficulties. Allies poured in upon him from the very quarter where they were least needed; and the savage warriors of Germany soon outnumbered his more tractable followers from his own country and the adjoining territories.[55] A vain assault upon the quarters of the imperial troops was followed by a wild invasion of the Gallic province, whence few if any reinforcements had been received by the insurgents.[56] It was probably done at the demand of the Germans, who sought for little besides booty from the insurrection. When they were quieted by blood and pillage, it was probably Civilis who induced them to return to their attack upon the Roman legions. A campaign of some weeks ensued, during which the Batavian encountered several of the Roman commanders, generally with success, but universally without effect.[57]

The triumph of Vespasian's cause obliged the insurgent leader to declare himself Vespasian's enemy. He had professed to be Vespasian's friend only to

[54] Tac., Hist., iv. 17.
[55] Id., ib., 21, 27, 28, 37.
[56] Id., ib., 28.
[57] Id., ib., 28–37.

avert the united hostility of the Romans and their rulers. Now, at length, he stood the open enemy of each and all of them.[58] It may have been at this time that a German priestess of great repute with one of the confederate tribes[59] was consulted about the issue of the insurrection. "All will go well with the Germans," was the reply, "while the legions will be destroyed."[60] A severe ordeal lay before the independence thus staked upon the massacres and triumphs of a horde from the least civilized country then known to the Empire.

Another alliance was soon offered to Civilis. Notwithstanding the failure of his attempts to force and to persuade the Gallic races to join his enterprise, their allegiance to the imperial authority was exceedingly precarious. Every class had its members desirous of returning to the laws and the habits of their forefathers. The year before the outbreak of the Batavians, Mariccus, a man of the lower order in the Boian tribe, assumed the name of the Divine Champion of Gaul.[61] His divinity did not save him from being defeated with eight thousand followers by forces raised chiefly amongst the Æduans.[62] At the same period, many of the highest rank in Gaul had sworn together "not to be faithless to the liberty of their country whenever the Roman sway should be sufficiently weakened

[58] "Omissa dissimulatione in populum Romanum ruere." Tac., Hist., IV. 54.

[59] "Numinis loco." Tac., Germ., 8. Clement of Alexandria alludes to these much-revered priestesses. Strom., I. 15, tom. I. p. 360. See Procopius, Bell. Vand., II. 8.

[60] Tac., Hist., IV. 61.

[61] "Adsertor Galliarum et deus." Id., ib., II. 61.

[62] Id., ib.

by civil war."[63] The time arrived for proving the fidelity of those who had taken the oath, as well as the energy of those who were everywhere longing for hostilities against Rome. It was when one Emperor after another, one army after another had fallen, that the tidings of the new revolution effected by Vespasian and his troops swelled the agitation of Gaul to overflow. The legions of the northwestern army, by whom the vanquished Emperor Vitellius had been proclaimed, were too much opposed to his victor to act with effect against any insurrection. The appearances in other quarters contributed still more to lessen the apprehensions of the Gauls in regard to the imperial force that might be brought against them. When it was heard that the Capitol at Rome had been consumed in the conflicts there, the Druid priests began to chant the sure exaltation of their country.[64]

The first steps towards union with the Batavian insurgents were taken by Julius Classicus. He was a Trevir of royal blood, then commanding a troop of cavalry recruited amongst his countrymen for the imperial service. Other eminent Gauls, likewise holding commands in the Roman armies, were engaged with Classicus in preparing for a general rising. One of these leaders was also a Trevir, Julius Tutor. Another was Julius Sabinus, a Lingon of fortune and great reputation.[65] A league with the chieftains of the northern insurrection was made

[63] Tac., Hist., IV. 54.
[64] Id., ib.
[65] Plut., Amat., tom. IX. p. 86.

by Classicus and Tutor, who then, declaring their purpose, took possession of the Roman quarters in which they had been stationed. The soldiers whom they induced to acknowledge their authority were obliged to swear allegiance to the Gallic Empire.[66] They then endeavored to impose the same oath upon their allies in the north.

But Civilis, still at the head of the Batavian and German confederacy, had no mind to contribute to a dominion in Gaul that might prove as insupportable as that against which he had raised the call to rebellion. Alliance with the Gallic leaders, much as it had been desired by the Batavian, could not be made upon the terms which they offered. Without rejecting their proposals, Civilis found it necessary to strengthen his connection with the German tribes. He professed his satisfaction at the progress which the insurrection had already made with their assistance, by cutting off his hair, in token of his being at length revenged upon the Romans. At the same time, he sent gifts to the priestess who had foretold the victories which her countrymen, under his guidance, had now achieved.[67]

The moment that the insurrection was thus divided, both its factions were doomed. The Gallic party made but little progress, notwithstanding their appeals to the national pride of their countrymen.[68] After sustaining a few defeats,[69] the leaders united

[66] "Pro imperio Gallorum." Tac. Hist., iv. 59. "In verba Galliarum." Id., ib., 60.

[67] Id., ib., iv. 61.

[68] See the differences of opinion in the council convoked by the Remi to discuss the question of "liberty or peace." Id., ib., iv. 67–70.

[69] Id., ib., 70, 71.

in offering the crown of the Gauls to Petilius Cerialis, a kinsman of Vespasian and the successful commander of the Roman forces.[70] Civilis is said to have been willing to join in the offer. But it received no sort of notice from the Roman. Bloody engagements followed fast.[71] None of the insurgent chieftains kept the field so long as Civilis; but even he was at length compelled to sue for peace.[72] "What else," asked Cerialis of the Gauls, "what else would you obtain in driving out our forces but wars of all your tribes with one another?" The question was already answered by the dissensions of the insurgents. "Cherish peace," was the exhortation of Cerialis, "cherish the power of Rome. . . . . Allegiance with security is better than sedition with destruction."[73] Before the end of the second year from the revolt of the Batavians, they and their allies were submissive to the authority which they had spurned. The fate of the leader Civilis is not related. He undoubtedly died a violent death.

The least vigorous of the leaders in this disastrous insurrection chances to have obtained the largest share of sympathy. Julius Sabinus, the Lingon, had occupied himself with vain-glorious visions[74] until an ill-advised expedition against the Sequani re-

[70] Tac., Hist., IV. 75.

[71] Id., ib, IV. 76–79. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVI. 3.

[72] Tac., Hist., V. 14–23, 26.

[73] "Proinde pacem et urbem, quam victi victoresque eodem jure obtinemus, amate, colite. Moneant vos utriusque fortunæ documenta, ne contumaciam cum pernicie, quam obsequium cum securitate, malitis." Id., ib., IV. 74.

[74] Boasting his illegitimate descent from Julius Cæsar, and ordering his followers to salute him by that great name. Id., ib., IV. 55.

sulted in the complete defeat of his disorderly array. Flying from the field to a villa, in the flames of which he was believed to have perished, he found refuge in some subterranean vaults, known only to two trusted servants of his household.[75] Thither he summoned his wife Epponina, who, after some months of concealment, took him in disguise to Rome, where they hoped to obtain his pardon. Finding, however, that his case was desperate, Epponina brought her husband back to his place of refuge. There, in greater perils than those of childbirth, she bore to him two sons. "I have borne them," she said to the Emperor Vespasian, before whom she and they stood arraigned with Sabinus, nine years after his disappearance, "I have borne these boys, that we who entreat your pity might be so many the more."[76] The boys were spared; but the parents were put to death. "Nor did that reign," writes one then living, "have anything sadder or more offensive to the gods in its whole history."[77]

Beyond the northwestern provinces on the continent, was the island which Julius Cæsar had visited as an unknown portion of the earth.[78] Tribes of various origin,[79] and divided amongst yet more various states, each under the dominion of its chieftain and its priesthood,[80] were still in the possession of

[75] Tac., Hist., IV. 67. Plut., Amat., tom. IX. pp. 86, 87.

[76] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVI. 16.

[77] Plut., Amat., tom. IX. p. 89.

[78] A. C. 55–54. Cæs., De Bell. Gall., IV. 20. "Aggressus est et Britannos ignotos antea." Suet., J. Cæs., 25.

[79] Tac., Agric. Vit., 11.

[80] Cæs., De Bell. Gall., VI. 13, 14, 16. Diod. Siculus, V. 31.

Britain a century later. The arms of Claudius were then directed against the island.[81] Seven years after crossing the Channel, the invaders had conquered only the southern districts of Britain.[82] In the interior, peopled by ruder races, Caractacus, the chief or king of the Silures, held out against the imperial forces until he was betrayed. His defeat was pronounced by the Senate to be one of the great achievements in the history of Roman warfare.[83] Some ten years subsequently, when the legions employed in Britain had made their way farther northwards into the very groves of Mona, the sacred island of the Druids, they met with continued resistance. Outraged, both as a queen and as a woman, Boadicea roused her people, the Iceni, and that of the adjoining states, against the strangers.[84] The bravery as well as the cruelty of the Britons was again fruitless. Boadicea, after witnessing the slaughter of her host, destroyed herself by poison.[85] One more defender of British liberty appeared in Galgacus, who, with a numerous force of Caledonians, as they are called, attempted to withstand the legions near the Grampian Hills.[86]

[81] A. D. 43. Dion Cass., LX. 19. Tac., Agric. Vit., 13, 14. Suet., Claud., 17.

[82] Yet the dramatist does not hesitate: —

"Cui [Claudio] totus paruit orbis
Ultra Oceanum."

Octavia, 27, 28.

[83] A. D. 51. Tac., Ann., XII. 36, 38. Caractacus, as is generally known, was pardoned by Claudius; but he is supposed to have died in Italy. Id., ib., 37. Dion Cass., LX. 20.

[84] A. D. 61. A terrible massacre, — "Clades Britannica," as Suetonius (Ner., 29) calls it, — was the consequence. Tac., Ann., XIV. 33. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXII. 1.

[85] Tac., Ann., XIV. 37. Cf. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXII. 12.

[86] A. D. 84. Tac., Agric. Vit., 29, 38.

The successes of the Romans in Britain were not obtained without the employment of their most valiant generals and their most skilful governors.[87] No one of these was so conspicuous as Julius Agricola, who served under several commanders in the island until he himself was invested with the British proconsulship, in the reign of Vespasian.[88] Galgacus was overcome by Agricola, by whom also the island was organized as a province. The biographer of the Proconsul describes the justice and liberality shown in the settlement of the country. Nor does it seem, at first, as if the advantages resulting to the Britons from their submission to the measures of Agricola could be exaggerated. Instead of being divided into scores of hostile tribes, the islanders were united as the common subjects of a dominion which they could not but revere. Wild forages for plunder were exchanged for comparatively peaceful labors. Where men had gathered for the sake of fearful combat, or still more fearful worship, they were now to meet in the pursuits of comparatively enlightened society.[89] These are the colors upon the Roman canvas. But the picture by the Briton of a later generation is darker in its hues. "The Romans," says Gildas, "having slain many and re-

[87] Vespasian was second in command under Claudius. Tac., Agric. Vit., 13 Petilius Cerialis, the conqueror of Civilis, received, immediately afterwards, the appointment to Britain. Id., ib., 8. Horsley describes the successive conquests in his Britannia Romana, book I. ch. 2, 3.

[88] A. D. 78. Tac., Agric. Vit., 5, 8, 9.

[89] Id., ib., 19, 21. "Tradiderat Agricola successori suo provinciam quietam tutamque." Id., ib., 40.

served others for slaves, that the land might not be entirely reduced to desolation, ... returned to Italy, leaving behind them taskmasters, to scourge the shoulders of the natives, to reduce their necks to the yoke, and their soil to the vassalage of a Roman province. ..... So that it was no longer thought to be Britain, but a Roman island." [90]

The other provinces added to the imperial realms during the first century were organized without resistance or lamentation. Iturea [91] and Commagene [92] in the farther East; Cappadocia, [93] Pontus, [94] and Cilicia, [95] in Asia Minor; Thrace [96] in Europe, and Mauretania [97] in Africa, with one or two districts of inferior note, [98] were quietly occupied in successive reigns. A brace of kingdoms [99] and a few states still styled free or allied, though within the imperial boundaries, remained, as if to furnish the materials of some additional provinces, whenever it pleased a sovereign or his legions to assume the name of conquerors.

No more need be told to exhibit the absence of liberty in the provinces. The attempts to obtain

[90] Gildas, 7. Giles's trans.

[91] Annexed to Syria under Claudius. Tac., Ann., XII. 23.

[92] Finally reduced to a province under Vespasian. Josephus, Bell. Jud., VII. 7. 1–3.

[93] Under Tiberius. Tac., Ann., II. 56. Eutr., VII. 6.

[94] Under Nero. Suet., Ner., 18; Aur. Vict., Cæs., 5. 2. Eutr., VII. 9.

[95] Under Vespasian. Suet., Vesp., 8.

[96] Under Tiberius and Vespasian. Tac., Ann., II. 67. Suet., Vesp., 8.

[97] Under Caligula or Claudius. Cf. Plin., Nat. Hist., v. 1, Suet., Cal., 26, and Dion Cass., LX. 9.

[98] As the corner by the Cottian Alps under Nero. Suet., Ner., 18. Eutr., VII. 9.

[99] Bosphorus and Armenia. On the conquests and provinces of the Empire, see Ruperti, Röm. Alterthümer, vol. I. pp. 84 *et seq.*

freedom, which have been narrated, were but those of men to recover the dominion possessed by their ancestors, if not by themselves. From Judea to Britain the cry to arms came from such as sought the liberty to rule rather than to be free. Not by such means was it ordained that the subjects of Rome should rise above their humiliation.

Yearly, upon the anniversary of the sovereign's accession, the imperial governors called together the authorities of their respective provinces. The long array of the military represented the power by which the sovereign was supported on the one side. In the procession of the civil functionaries appeared the power by which he was supported on the other side. The multitude subject to the dominion thus constituted was personated by the throng of provincials in attendance upon their superiors. Year by year, the civil and the military bodies at the festival varied. Almost as frequent were the changes in the name to which allegiance was sworn. But the inhabitants of the provinces, always represented by the same submissive deputies, were always held to the same submissive promises of subjection.[100]

100 "Diem, Domine," writes Pliny, the Prætor of the Pontic province, "quo servasti imperium, dum suscipis, quanta mereris lætitia celebravimus, precati deos, ut te generi humano, cujus tutela et securitas saluti tuæ innisa est, incolumem florentemque præstarent. Prævimus, et commilitonibus jus jurandum more solemni præstantibus, et provincialibus qui eadem certarunt pietate, juvantibus. Ep., x. 60.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FRONTIER.

"Liberty . . . . full of threats to all."
Hamlet.

A Roman, during the reign of Tiberius, was detected in flight to the Parthians.[1] To him, as to his fellow-Romans, there was no place of refuge within the boundaries of the Empire. The only important insurrection against Domitian was based upon the pledge of aid from some German tribes.[2] None of the imperial realms could promise equally efficient coöperation. To the subject, the frontier wore the aspect of a quarter whence relief might come to him in his oppression.

In a certain degree it wore the same aspect to the rulers of the Empire. Augustus betrothed his daughter to a Getan king, whose daughter the Emperor proposed to marry in return.[3] Nero, despairing at the insurrection which terminated his reign, conceived the idea of throwing himself upon the

[1] Tac., Ann., vi. 14.
[2] Suet., Dom., 6, 7. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., lxvii. 11.
[3] Suet., Aug., 63.

protection of the Parthian monarch.[4] The sovereign himself might thus seek for support beyond his dominions against the peril threatening him within them.

Not yet were the perils of the frontier generally perceived, either by rulers or by subjects. All that the Romans discerned upon their borders was a line of tribes, useful as allies, formidable as foes, but exciting no serious apprehensions as invaders, much less as victors. No feeling towards the northern nations was equal to the contempt with which they were regarded by the great majority of the Roman world. The principle that had led every race of antiquity to despise the alien as an inferior still prevailed. He who would have fled to the strangers for refuge, he who would have depended upon them for service, looked down upon them as degraded beings. As yet, therefore, no fears had been aroused that these despised races could ever prevail against the lordly race of Rome.

The northern tribes may have had no thought of attempting the conquest of Rome. But they had still less of submitting to the Roman power. Whatever contempt was entertained towards them, they more than repaid it to the Romans. The barbarian, as he was called, might be contemned as uncultivated. He disdained the Roman as enervated. His rude habits, his unsettled laws, might excite the scorn of the Roman. The institutions and the customs steeping the Roman in luxury and in servi-

[4] Suet., Ner., 47, 57.

tude were still more despicable to the barbarian. With this view of their foes, and with their unwearied readiness to take up arms, the northern tribes formed unquiet groups upon the frontier.

We turn to an Eastern neighbor, the Parthian nation. Their Empire was second only to that of the Romans. Its monarchs, rising by a sudden revolution, two hundred and fifty years before our era, obtained dominion over the larger part of Asia between the Euphrates and the Indus. A superior class of nobles, with an inferior multitude, chiefly composed of troops and slaves, formed the subjects of the Parthian kings, whose dominion became more and more similar to that of the ancient Oriental monarchs. In vain had the armies of the Commonwealth been directed against the power of Parthia. Nor were the losses of the expeditions in the period immediately preceding the establishment of the Empire more than nominally retrieved.[5] The reign of Vologeses, from about the middle until towards the close of the first century, might have dispelled any ideas of the Roman rulers concerning the possibility of subduing the Parthian Empire. The pretensions to supremacy were rather upon the other side. The despatches of the Parthian to the Roman sovereign bore the proud superscription, "From the king of kings."[6] A period of nominal

[5] Augustus was content with the restitution of the standards which Crassus and Antony had lost. Justin., XLII. 5. Suet., Aug., 21. Dion Cass., LIII. 33. The account of his having demanded hostages is sufficiently disproved by Tac., Ann., II. 1.

[6] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVI. 11.

peace ensued. But the Parthian monarch was active in the support of a nearer and much more dangerous enemy than himself to the Roman Empire.[7]

This was Decebalus, the chieftain, as the name denotes, of Dacia. Full of passion, full of power, he seems to have constituted himself the avenger of the races that had fallen, as well as the champion of those that had not yet fallen beneath the blows of Rome. The ancient historian calls the war, beginning with the irruption of the Dacians from their territories beyond the Danube, the greatest of the time.[8] Two armies were defeated; and twice was the Emperor Domitian compelled to appear amongst his soldiers to prevent their courage or their allegiance from failing utterly. Some of the German tributaries not only refused to send their customary reinforcements, but even entered into the war with so much eagerness as to defeat the forces with whom they had been wont to serve.[9] Nor did the alarms of the invasion cease until Domitian consented to pay tribute to the Dacian chieftain, who then withdrew, five years after the commencement of hostilities.[10] The Emperor disported himself as a victor, while the acclamations of his subjects covered the disasters of his armies.[11]

Not the Dacian frontier merely was assailed. The

[7] Plin., Ep., x. 16.
[8] A. D. 86. Dion Cass, ap. Xiph., LXVII. 6.
[9] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVII. 7.
[10] A. D. 91. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVII. 7.
[11] Id, ib., 8. Suet., Dom., 6. Tac., Agric. Vit., 39, 40.

eye of Julius Cæsar, during his first campaign in Gaul, had caught sight of the hosts advancing from the German borders. "It was perilous," as he wrote, "to the Roman people, that the Germans should accustom themselves to cross the Rhine, and come in multitudes to Gaul. Nor will wild and barbarous men," as he foretold, "restrain themselves, after having taken possession of Gaul, from descending southwards, and marching thence upon Italy."[12] Half a century afterwards, his successor, Augustus, was busy with contests and negotiations on the German frontier. As if to meet the enemy with their own men, recruits were drawn into the legions from the hostile tribes, while large masses were transported to settle upon the Roman territories.[13] Where neither immigrants nor recruits could be gained, fortifications were raised against the restless movements of the German nations.[14] The strife, as had been foreseen by one if by no more, began amidst unwonted alarms upon the Roman side.

Arminius, chief of the Cheruscans, was the first in the long succession of northern warriors braving the domination of Rome. His services and those of his people in the imperial armies had accustomed them as well as him to a discipline which greatly contributed to his success. Rewarded by the grant not only of citizenship, but also of equestrian rank,[15] Arminius seems to have seen the emptiness

[12] Bell. Gall., I. 33.

[13] Suet., Aug., 21. Tib., 9.

[14] Id., Claud., 1. Florus, IV. 12.

[15] Vell. Pat., II. 118.

of the honors which he had won, in comparison with those which he might yet acquire as the deliverer of his country from its apparently impending subjugation. Quintilius Varus was commissioned by Augustus to organize the territory between the Weser and the Rhine as an imperial province. Just beyond these limits stood the line of Arminius, who, though himself unmolested, summoned the neighboring tribes to arms. The rout of Varus, at the head of six legions, soon ensued.[16] It carried consternation to Rome. The limits of their conquests seemed to have been reached at last.[17]

They were soon obliged to defend what they had already conquered. Maroboduus the Sueve went from Rome, where he had spent his youth as a hostage, to undertake the establishment of a rival dominion. As if to inure himself and his race, the Marcomanni, to the conflicts entailed by his enterprise, he conducted them from their narrow quarters by the Rhine into the centre of the German realm. Besides securing their training, the march led them to a broader territory than that which they had left. The settlements of the Boii were made the foundations of a kingdom that for a season merited the title of the German Empire.[18] It was soon matched against the Roman. Not merely was welcome openly given to refugees from the imperial sway, but en-

[16] A. D. 9. Dion Cass., LVI. 18 *et seq.* Tac., Ann., I. 55 *et seq.* Florus, IV. 12.

[17] "That memorable defeat," says Arnold, "which forever confined the Romans to the western side of the Rhine, and preserved the Teutonic nation, — the regenerating element in modern Europe, — safe and free." App. C. to Life and Correspondence, vol. II. p. 377.

[18] Tac., Germ., 28, 42.

couragement to rebellion was secretly afforded to the inhabitants of the northern provinces, especially of those lying south of the Danube.[19] Pannonia and Dalmatia were presently in revolt under the two Batos.[20] One of the imperial chroniclers, in alluding to the forces and the years spent against the insurrection, calls it the most dreadful conflict since the Punic War.[21] The Cæsars Tiberius and Germanicus, with thirty legions, were sent to subdue the insurgents, who were at length overcome.[22]

The same spirit which armed the northern warriors against the oppressor abroad excited them against the oppressor at home. Maroboduus, to whose desertion the Panonnians and Dalmatians owed their overthrow, had provoked general indignation. Arminius, still the champion of German independence, led a large band against Maroboduus, who was forced to seek protection from Rome.[23] A second attack upon him was made by Catualda, a chief whom Maroboduus had driven from his country.[24] Maroboduus then fled in person to the Roman court, in whose dependence he ended his days at Ravenna. The same year witnessed the murder of Arminius by his kindred, who had begun to suspect him of tyrannical intentions.[25] The Germans were resolute to be free.

It appeared in their institutions. A priesthood

[19] Vell. Pat., II. 108, 109.

[20] The one a Pannonian, the other a Dalmatian.

[21] Suet., Tib., 16.

[22] After having fought for three years, A. D. 6–9. Id., ib., 20. Dion Cass., LV. 28 *et seq.*, LVI. 11 *et seq.*

[23] A. D. 17. Tac., Ann., II. 44–46.

[24] A. D. 19. Id., ib., II. 62, 63.

[25] Id., ib., II. 88.

was raised by the superstitions of a rude religion to what seemed the highest rank.[26] But it was a class of warriors, headed by a king or chief, that held the supremacy. These warriors were such as had slain Arminius and put Maroboduus to flight. They would bear with no rulers amongst themselves. They were such as rose again and again against the Roman forces. They would bear with no foreign rulers. For they themselves were rulers. The chieftain was but their leader. The priest was but their minister. They therefore directed the priesthood. They controlled the king. They governed with unswerving sway the masses of retainers and slaves beneath them. To be free, the warriors of the north thought it necessary to rule. Their dominion was the first point and the last in their institutions. As the institutions of warriors, the institutions of the frontier were such as had belonged to an earlier age.

In this light they were viewed by the Romans. Some despised the antiquated forms, the undeveloped statutes of the races upon the frontier. Others, on the contrary, admired the system that allowed the northern warriors to call themselves free. "Beyond the Tigris," sang the poet, "beyond the Rhine hath liberty receded."[27] The historian chimed in. "Long are the wars," he said, "in which the Germans are to be conquered. Not the Italians or the Carthaginians, not the Spaniards or the Gauls, not

[26] Cæs., Bell. Gall., VI. 13, 16, and Tac., Germ., 7.

[27] "Hac luce cruenta
Effectum ut Latios non horreat India fasces, ...
Quod fugiens civile nefas, redituraque nunquam,
Libertas ultra Tigrim Rhenumque recessit."
LUCAN., *Phars.*, VII. 427 *et seq.*

even the Parthians have more frequently daunted us. For the liberty of the Germans is more bravely defended than the oppression prevailing amongst other nations."[28] It was not seen that the liberty of the North was but the liberty to rule. Still less was it perceived to be the liberty to rule, one day, over Rome. Yet the contempt generally felt for the barbarian was already lessened by apprehensions of his advance. "Rest," says the historian again, "is hateful to these people. . . . . Nor are they so easily induced to till the ground or to await the harvest, as to plunge into the midst of enemies and wounds. Base, indeed, do they esteem it to seek by labor what they can gain by bloodshed."[29]

Amidst the vague alarms thus inspired in the Romans, their foes were positively drawing nearer. Odin marches from the East. Before him, as he leads his followers northwards, lie races to be subdued, lands to be overrun. Above him, above those accompanying him, the Walhalla opens to all ascending with clashing arms and bleeding limbs. The vision of the mythic invader discloses the reality. The races upon the frontier advance with resistless energies. Behind them, as if to urge them on, distant warriors are pressing forward. Pantchao the Chinese achieves his mighty conquests in the East.[30] A movement westward begins, increases,

[28] Tac., Germ., 37.

[29] Id., ib., 14. Concerning the account of the German institutions by Tacitus, see Luden's Hist. of the Teut. People, book III. ch. 1, note 2. Cf. Stuart's View of Society, book I. ch. 1, and notes.

[30] "Il soumit plus de cinquante royaumes. (A. D. 80, 94.) . . . . . Il nourrissait (A. D. 102) même le projet d'entamer l'Empire Romain." Klaproth, Tabl. Hist. de l'Asie, p. 67.

and reaches the tribes upon the Roman borders. They break up their lines. And whither? To march against Rome. The "liberty of bloody hand" spreads along the frontier.

CHAPTER V.

LIBERTY OF THE HEATHEN SUBJECT.

"Quid ergo nos sumus? Quid ista quæ nos circumstant, alunt, sustinent? Tota rerum natura umbra est, aut inanis, aut fallax. Non facile dixerim utrum magis irascar illis qui nos nihil scire voluerunt, an illis qui ne hoc quidem nobis reliquerunt, nihil scire." SENECA, Ep. 88.

WE have seen the subjects of the Empire striving for what they considered liberty. It was the liberty of the ruler at which they aimed. Only here and there have we marked attempts to gain what may be called the liberty of the subject. It has not yet been proved whether this was possible for the Heathen.

A satirist born at the close of the first century has left a picture of life as it was to most of his contemporaries. "Let a temple be designed," he says, "lofty and gilded, not placed in a low position upon a plain, but above the plain, upon a hill. And let the approach be long and steep and slippery, so that they who think themselves already at the summit may frequently lose their footing and be precipitated downwards. Within let the god of Wealth be seated, all golden, as he seems, and very

fair and amiable. And let the man who has hardly been able to climb up to the portal be represented as staring in astonishment at the gold. Then let him be led in by Hope, fair of countenance and attired in embroidered robes, astonishment being still depicted upon his features. And let Hope continue to precede him, while other women, Deceit and Bondage, appear to receive him and present him to Toil. This one, after long torment of the wretched man, is to resign him, sickly and pallid, to Old Age, when Contempt is to take him and deliver him over to Despair. Hope is to disappear. Then he, suffering and naked, is to be thrust out, not through the golden portals by which he entered, but through an opposite and hidden doorway. And here let him be met by Penitence, weeping without avail, and completing the woe of the miserable being." [1]

These are dark outlines. "Would, O Sun," a philosopher of the time was said to have exclaimed, "would that some expiation could be made to thee for the crimes with which the earth is afflicted!" [2] To be sensible of the errors into which men had fallen and to desire their correction, were signs of higher purposes than those of ordinary lives. Other signs to the same effect occur. They are to be sought out as the indications by which we may judge of the liberty within the reach of the Heathen subject.

[1] Lucian., De Merc. Conductis, 42.

[2] Apollonius of Tyana, ap. Philost., Vit. Apoll., VII. 6.

The most eminent scholar of the early imperial period was the elder Pliny.[3] His fidelity in public life was not less remarkable than the industry with which his leisure hours were improved. He wrote history, military and civil, grammatical treatises, commentaries or annotations, with a larger work on Natural History, describing the productions and the divisions of the universe. On all these he labored as though they had been so many stones to pile, trusting, perhaps, that if he brought them together by dint of unwearied exertion, they would rise of themselves into majestic proportions. "Here," he remarks in his preface to his principal production, "here are twenty thousand things worthy of attention, gathered from the reading of about two thousand volumes, besides many points hitherto unnoticed or unknown. Yet I do not doubt," he adds, "but that many things have escaped me."[4] Such toils as these preserved him from many of the oppressions beneath which others fell.[5]

But it was not because they freed him from the gloomy uncertainties that hung upon his generation. "Of all people," he writes, "in the wide world, the Roman hath showed itself to be undoubtedly the most transcendent in virtue. But to what man hath been given the largest prosperity, it is not for mortal judgment to decide. If we wished, indeed,

[3] C. Plinius Secundus was born in the north of Italy in the reign of Tiberius, A. D. 23. He came to Rome at an early age, and served in the various military and civil offices of the times.

[4] Nat. Hist., lib. I. Præf. 13.

[5] Note, especially, the resolution with which he encountered death (A. D. 79) in search of knowledge. Plin. Jun., Ep., VI. 16.

to form a true judgment, we should decide that no human being is really prosperous."[6] In another place he says, "the only thing certain is that there is nothing certain, and that there is nothing more wretched or more proud than man. The chief consolation of our imperfect nature is that not even the Deity can do all things. No power can endow us with eternity, or call back the dead who have passed through all that is best amongst the many pains of life."[7] Such lamentations measure the liberty of the subject as the scholar.

It fared the same with the subject as the philosopher. "I am not a sage," wrote Seneca, the follower of the court as well as of the school. "Nor shall I be one," he adds. "I therefore exact from myself not that I should be equal to the best, but that I should be better than the worst men. It is enough for me daily to abate something from my vices and to renounce my sins. I have not reached a state of perfect health; nor shall I ever do so. My effort is not to cure, but to lighten my disease; and I shall be content if it recurs less frequently and attacks me less grievously. . . . . Yet I shall not cease praising the life which I know I ought to, though I do not lead."[8]

"Philosophy," declared Seneca, "is nothing else than the right mode of living, in other words, the science of living honorably, or again, the art of rightly spending life. We shall not err if we say

[6] Nat. Hist., VII. 44. Cf. his description of human misery. Ib., VII. 1.

[7] Ib., II. 5.

[8] De Vit. Beat., 17, 18.

that philosophy is the law of living well and honorably."[9] It was one thing to define philosophy as the law of life. But it was quite another thing to make it correspond to the definition thus bestowed. To do so, however, Seneca spared no pains, no praises. "Philosophy and virtue," he asserts, "are identical."[10] "Nothing will be done," he says, "if we are ignorant of what virtue is."[11] "It opens the mind and prepares it for the knowledge of celestial things. . . . . Nor is human happiness consummated until all evil is surmounted as the spirit seeks immensity."[12] Thence, according to Seneca, the seeker returns with power to subdue the trials of earth. But the philosopher cannot promise the attainment of principles never deceiving, never varying. On the contrary, he stands in doubt, believing at one time that "to obey the Deity is to be free,"[13] at another declaring that "perfect liberty is to have no fear either of men or of gods."[14] "We are playing at hazard," confesses Seneca.[15] "We shall seem," he repeats, "to be exercising our wits on vanities, to be spending our leisure in discussions that can do no good."[16]

Yet there were principles, above those generally prevailing, at which the philosopher more securely

[9] "Et qui dixerit," he adds, "illam regulam vitæ, suum illi nomen reddiderit." Frag., ap. Lactant., Div. Inst., III. 15.

[10] "Cohærent ergo inter se." Ep. 89.

[11] Ep. 95.

[12] Nat. Quæst., lib. I. Præf. 5.

[13] "Deo parere libertas est." De Vit. Beat., 15.

[14] "Absoluta libertas non homines timere non deos." Ep. 75 "Deos nemo sanus timet." De Ben., III. 19.

[15] Ep. 106.

[16] Ep. 113. See Ep. 88.

arrived. "Will you recollect," exclaims Seneca, "that he whom you call your slave is sprung from the same source, that he enjoys the same skies, that he breathes, lives and dies no otherwise than you? . . . . A slave he is; but he is, perhaps, a freeman in mind. And show me," he cries, "who is not a slave. One serves his lust, another his avarice, another his ambition: all of us are slaves to fear. . . . . Let your slaves love you rather than fear you."[17] The same humanity appears in his plea for a still lower class than that of common slaves. "By chance," he writes, "I dropped in at the afternoon games. I expected to hear a play, and to be amused with jests and bloodless diversions. . . . . But I beheld what must be called mere homicides. The gladiators had nothing with which they were protected; their whole bodies were exposed, nor did they ever aim their own blows in vain."[18] "Man," he writes again, "that should be sacred to man, is slain for sport; and he, whom it would be a crime to instruct in giving and receiving wounds, is now brought out, naked and unarmed, to die when he has finished his part in the spectacle."[19] The more earnestly does Seneca plead for the sway of his philosophy. "Virtue," he asserts, "is closed against no man. It is open to all, it admits all, it invites all, freemen, freedmen, slaves, kings and exiles. It asks neither house nor fortune. It is content with the naked man."[20] No stronger plea had ever been made by a Heathen for the liberty of the subject.

[17] Ep. 47.
[18] Ep. 7.
[19] Ep. 95.
[20] De Ben., III. 18.

Seneca was followed by Musonius Rufus. Suspected of taking part in the conspiracy which cost Seneca his life,[21] Musonius was banished from Rome, whither he returned after the fall of Nero.[22] He immediately attempted to dissuade the legions, at that time in open war, from shedding one another's blood.[23] A little later, he appeared as the accuser of the informer whose charges had resulted in the death of Barea Soranus the Senator.[24] Otherwise, we find no trace of Musonius Rufus amidst the contentions with which Rome was distracted. His days were rather spent as the teacher of the young,[25] or as the friend of the older men with whom he could "learn and accomplish," as he said, "whatever was right and practicable." To be able to do this was, according to him, to be a philosopher.[26]

The liberty of the subject reäppears in the doctrines of Musonius. The practical part of philosophy, as he asserts, is above all that is theoretical.[27] He vindicates the claim of women to the same culture, the same honor, as that of men. "They have the same reasoning faculties," he says, "the same senses and the same nature..... Inclination towards virtue is not man's monopoly. Women,

[21] It was the conspiracy headed by Piso against Nero.

[22] Tac., Ann., xv. 71. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., lxii. 27.

[23] Tac., Hist., iii. 81.

[24] Id., ib., iv. 10, 40.

[25] "Studia juvenum .... præceptis sapientiæ favebat." Tac., Ann., xv. 71. Epict., Diss., iii. 6.

[26] *Οὐ γὰρ δὴ φιλοσοφεῖν ἕτερόν τι φαίνεται ὂν ἢ τὸ ἃ πρέπει καὶ ἃ προσήκει λόγῳ μὲν ἀναζητεῖν ἔργῳ δὲ πράττειν.* Muson. Ruf., Reliquiæ, ed. Peerlkamp, p. 222.

[27] Id., ib., p. 177. So ap. Ritter and Preller, Hist. Phil. Gr. Rom., § 456.

no less than men, have been born to take pleasure in goodness and in justice."[28] Still more earnest is the language in which Musonius urges the claim of the child to protection. In an age when the highest[29] as well as the lowest considered their offspring too burdensome to be reared,[30] Musonius appeals to the holier affections of his contemporaries. "It is fit," he exclaims, "to reflect that there can be no fairer sight than a band of children accompanying their father or their mother. . . . . And for whom besides would one so readily pray to the gods or so willingly labor with his own hands?"[31]

Let us turn to the provinces. At Alexandria we shall meet with Philo the Jew, engaged in harmonizing the Heathen philosophy with the Jewish religion. On this, as the basis, he would have reared the principles which others had built up on different foundations.[32] The liberty of the subject appears prominent in the system which Philo would have constructed. Free, as he pronounces men, to choose between right and wrong,[33] they must turn to "Him who is alone able to preserve them in safety and

[28] Reliq., as above, pp. 249 *et seq.*

[29] The Emperor Claudius exposed an illegitimate infant of his wife. Suet., Claud., 27. The historian of the first century regards it as a singular fact, that the Jew was not allowed to put his new-born babe to death. Tac., Hist., v. 5. So Germ., 19.

[30] Plin., Ep., iv. 15. In vain did Augustus and Nerva attempt to change the law and the custom on this point. Suet., Aug., 4, 46. Aur. Vict., Epit., xii. 4.

[31] Reliq., pp. 223–226.

[32] "C'est Philon," a late French writer rather extravagantly remarks, "qui ouvre la carrière du syncrétisme aux grandes écoles de son temps." Vacherot, École d'Alexandrie, tom. i. p. 166.

[33] Quod Deus Immut., Op. ed. Mang., vol. i. p. 279.

in virtue."[34] It was a noble summons to have been delivered in a period of subjection to human power. But he who uttered the summons confesses the impossibility of its being received. Not only was man too weak, according to Philo, but the Deity was too incomprehensible.[35]

Apollonius of Tyana made the Heathen religion the groundwork of his speculations. Tyana was a town of Cappadocia, not far removed from the southern cities of Asia Minor, where the scholar could drink of the waters flowing from many a near and many a distant source of philosophy. Apollonius, not content with the advantages within his reach at home, set out upon a pilgrimage to the farthest East, whence he returned to slake his still unsatisfied thirst for wisdom in the countries of the West. With the materials thus collected, he attempted to form a combination of existing schools, to which the Heathen religion should serve as the bond and the foundation. The liberty of the subject is but shadowed forth by Apollonius. He wonders that Minerva has not abandoned the Athenians on account of their having polluted her Acropolis with the blood of gladiators.[36] But he describes the immortals as too exalted to be approached with offerings or to be reached by prayers.[37] The homage which his followers might have offered to their

[34] Ὡς ἀσινῆ καὶ ἀδιάφθορον ἱκανῶ μόνῳ διαφυλάξαι. De Præm. et Pœn., vol. II. p. 410. So De Mund. Opif., vol. II. p. 32.

[35] See his Leg. Alleg., vol. I. p. 107; Quod Deus Immut., p. 282; De Abraham., vol. II. p. 13.

[36] Philost., Vit. Apoll. Tyan., IV. 22.

[37] Eus., Præp. Ev., IV. 13.

deities was diverted to him.[38] His opponents declared him to be an impostor.[39] There were few who could comprehend his purposes, fewer still who could be benefited by them.

A simpler spirit than that of Apollonius was quickened by the same devotion to the ancient religion. The duties of the priesthood, assumed by Plutarch, the biographer and the philosopher, on his retirement to his native Chæronea, were blended with the experiences which he had gathered in his journeys and in his various researches. With him "the promise" of philosophy was "to prove that every principle of virtue and of happiness must be referred to the gods."[40] "Of all instruction," he writes, "this ought to be made the head and front..... By it and with it, we are to learn what is just and what is unjust, what must be sought and what shunned, how we are to worship the gods, to honor our parents, to reverence the old, to obey the laws, to serve our rulers, to love our friends, to cherish our wives, to watch over our children, and to treat our slaves with justice."[41] Cleared from the stains of incredulity and superstition, the ancient faith would suffice, urged Plutarch, for all the exigencies of humanity.[42] With this deep trust, the Chæronean

[38] Philost., Vit. Apoll. Tyan., III. 58, IV. 1. Vopisc. Aurel., 24. Hierocles, ap. Lact., Div. Inst., V. 3.

[39] *Καὶ γόης καὶ μάγος ἀκριβῆς.* Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXVII. 18. "Sive ille magus, ut vulgus loquitur, sive philosophus ut Pythagorici tradunt." Hieron., Ep. 50, tom. IV. pars II. p. 568.

[40] De Soc. Gen., tom. VIII. p. 291.

[41] De Lit. Educ., tom. VI. pp. 23, 24.

[42] *Ἀρκεῖ γὰρ ἡ πάτριος καὶ παλαιὰ πίστις . . . . ἔδρα τις καὶ βάσις.* Amat., tom. IX. p. 29.

approached more nearly than his contemporaries to the liberty of the subject.

Still nearer was the approach of Epictetus, a Phrygian slave. Freed by his master at Rome, and expelled from the city as a teacher of philosophy, he settled at Nicopolis in Epirus, where he lived many years after the close of the century.[43] The sometime slave proved the peculiar advocate of the liberty to which the most oppressed might be led. "First and most important," he wrote, "is the point relating to the practice of the theories comprehended in philosophy."[44] "Some things," he proceeded, "are in our own control. Understanding, passion, desire, avoidance, and, in a word, all things that are our own doings, ... these are by nature free, unrestrained and unentangled."[45] "Our ideas," added Epictetus, "are to be developed; and in developing them, we cannot be hindered, we cannot be put to suffering."[46] "He is free, therefore," he concluded, "whose impulses are unfettered, whose longings are allowed to take their course, and whose efforts to turn from anything do not fail. Who, then, would wish to live in crime? No one. Who would wish to live deceived, declining, querulous and miserable? No one. None, consequently, of the wicked live as they wish. None, we may decide, are free."[47] Nor did

[43] Epict., Diss., I. 9. Aul. Gell., xv. 11, xvii. 19.

[44] Manual, 51. So Ib., 49. Diss., I. 29, II. 9, III. 3, IV. 6. See his reprobation of those merely professing philosophy, Ib., IV. 8, and ap. Aul. Gell., xvii. 19.

[45] Man., 1.

[46] *Καὶ ἐν ᾗ τὰ σαυτοῦ τιθέμενος οὐδέποτε κωλυθήσῃ, οὐδέποτ' ἐμποδισθήσῃ οὐ στενάξεις οὐ μέμψῃ.* Diss., I. 1.

[47] Ib., IV. 1.

the courageous philosopher hesitate to carry out the points which he proposed. A tyrant was openly pronounced to be a despicable object, in contrast to which the wise man was distinctly represented as a superior being.[48] "I take no thought," said Epictetus himself, "about what the Emperor may think of me."[49] "Why should any one be so anxious about the manner of his death as to tremble before a despot?"[50]

But the philosophy which soared so nobly soon sinks despairingly. Epictetus bids his pupils remember that the evils besetting them could never be removed, now that the days of heroes had passed away.[51] The truths, shining like stars amongst the Phrygian's teachings, are soon overcast. Ideas of a liberty to which all men might attain by resolute virtue fade in expressions of feebleness and frequent despondency.[52] The conception of a common Deity is clouded by the consequence deduced from it, that those conceiving it should clothe themselves with pride.[53] The recognition of the bonds uniting all men vanishes in the computation of their apprehensions and corruptions.[54] Like those before him, Epictetus appeared to scale the heights, only to lose his footing and be precipitated back amongst the mass who never thought of climbing.

[48] Diss., I. 19, III. 6.

[49] Ib., III. 7.

[50] Ib., II. 6. So II. 5, IV. 4, and Man., 1, 17, 21.

[51] Diss., II. 17.

[52] Ib., II. 6, 8, III. 3, IV. 1.

[53] Ib., I. 3.

"Come quei che va de notte,
Che porta il lume dietro e a se non giova."
Purgatorio.

[54] Diss., I. 13.

The moment, it seems, that philosophy was tried, it yielded like a scaffolding on which there could be no foothold. Tested by prosperity, it fell.[55] Tested by adversity, it crumbled into ruins. "Now," writes Pliny concerning a bereaved father, "now he despises everything that he has been hearing and saying during his life."[56] Another, whom Pliny entitles the friend and the teacher of his existence, is described as destroying himself with "that determination which wise men regard as necessity." With "many motives," according to Pliny himself, "to live, with a clear conscience, a clear fame, and a reputation of the highest character, ... he had suffered so long from disease that the inducements to live were overborne by the inducements to die."[57] Vain was the search of the subject after liberty within the schools of the Empire.

Equally vain was his search beneath the laws. The believers, so to speak, in visible statutes, rather than in invisible abstractions, were not rewarded as they fain would have been. Living the least ideally, they by no means lived the most happily.[58] Yet with many clinging to the laws, the aspiration after the liberty of the subject was very strong. The jurists of the next century bear witness to the influences that had acted upon their predecessors and upon all resorting to their counsels. To catch the

[55] The satirist of the next century describes the attainments of a Pythagorician as "arithmetic, astronomy, quackery, geometry, music and sorcery." Lucian., Vit. Auctio, 2. See the Icaro-Menippus, 29.

[56] Plin., Ep., v. 16.

[57] Id., ib., i. 12.

[58] On the jurists and their privileges, see Schweppe, Röm. Rechtsgesch., § 75 *et seq.* On the professions generally, see Naudet, Mém. de l'Inst., Insc. et Bell. Lett., tom. x. pp. 423 *et seq.*

tone assumed by the ordinances of the earlier period, we can turn to the edict branding with infamy not only the unfaithful soldier, but the unfaithful parent, the unfaithful man.[59] To do justice to the civilians of the later period, we must read the words of Celsus, defining law as "the art of virtue and equity,"[60] or those of Ulpian, proclaming "the precepts of the law" to be "these three: to live honorably, to injure no one, and to give to every one his own."[61]

"These liberal studies," says Seneca of his pursuits, "are thus called because they are worthy of men who love liberty..... And are they to do us no good? Are they to lead to other things, and not to virtue?"[62] It seemed as if they led to nothing. The labor of the jurist, the philosopher and the scholar resulted in failure. Every such failure, however, was a gain. They who toiled and surely sorrowed deserve to be held in reverent recollection.[63] But their success would have been a fearful loss. It would have been a long lasting impediment to a truer liberty than that to which the Heathen subject could attain.

One of the saddest marks upon this age of trial was the oppression of woman. From the poor place allotted her in antiquity, she had fallen still lower at its closing period. Once the matron of Rome was

[59] Digest., lib. III. tit. II. 1. See the fifth title of the fourth book, De Capite.

[60] Ib., lib. I. tit. I. 1.

[61] Ib., ib. 10. So in his glance towards the law of nature, "Quia, quod ad jus naturale attinet, omnes homines æquales sunt." Ib., lib. L. tit. XVII. 32.

[62] Ep. 88.

[63] "La Liberté sourit à toutes les vic times,
À tous les devouments sublimes."
VICTOR HUGO.

accounted worthy of love in private and of respect in public. Even the authorities, on whom she was utterly dependent, honored her. Even her husband, to whom she was completely subject, esteemed her. To her influence as a mother, the ancient rhetorician ascribes the readiness with which her children entered upon the honorable pursuits of manhood.[64] All this was now greatly altered. The higher the rank of the Roman lady, the lower seemed her abasement in luxury and licentiousness. Instead of rearing her children in virtue, she disgraced them by her vices. Instead of awakening the affection of her spouse and the regard of the powers that were, she was stigmatized by her own contemporaries as a reproach both to her country and to her family.[65]

To this degradation there were honorable exceptions. The younger Pliny writes in great grief of the serious illness that had seized Fannia, the daughter of Thrasea Pætus and the widow of Helvidius Priscus. "For I mourn," he says, "that a woman like her should be snatched from our eyes; nor do I know that they will ever behold another. Such chastity, such sanctity, such dignity, such constancy! .... How cheerful she is, how affable, how amiable as well as venerable! She will be one whom we shall hereafter point out to our wives; one, from whom we men ourselves shall be able to derive examples of fortitude. And even now, while we see and hear her, we regard her as we do those of whom we read."[66]

[64] Dial. de Orat., 28.

[65] Juvenal's sixth satire is full of fearful testimony.

[66] Ep., VII. 19.

The same writer describes the character of a maiden who died just as her nuptial day had been appointed. "No one," he exclaims, "ever seemed worthier not only of a longer life, but, I might almost say, of immortality. She had not yet passed her fourteenth year, but she already showed the prudence of age and the dignity of a matron, without losing the charms of youth or the modesty of a virgin. How was she wont to hang upon her father's neck! How lovingly and modestly was she wont to greet us who were her father's friends! How she loved her nurses, her teachers and her preceptors! How eagerly and intelligently was she accustomed to pursue her studies, how sparingly and decorously to engage in her amusements! With how great serenity, patience, and even constancy did she bear her last malady! While she obeyed her physicians, she comforted her sister and her father, sustaining herself, though entirely deprived of bodily strength, by the vigor of her mind. This lasted to the end; nor was it interrupted either by the length of her illness or by the fear of death."[67] While such maidens and such matrons as Pliny laments remained, the liberty of the Heathen subject was not yet wholly extinguished.

But it was, as it had ever been, in gloom. Even in this it was confined to the few who strove to liberate themselves. The masses waiting to be liberated had nothing that could be called the liberty of the subject. They had never had any liberty.

[67] Ep., v. 16.

But the number of those now bereft of it was increased. The number of those endeavoring to attain to it was now diminished. The success of those who endeavored to succeed was smaller, rarer, than it had ever been. Their powers were broken beneath the dominion by which they were humbled. Their laws had crumbled under the same overwhelming oppression. There was no tenure by which they could hold, there was no right by which they could claim their liberty in any form. Much less was there any means by which they could attain to the spiritual liberty wherewith even the darkest would have been enlightened, even the lowest exalted. The highest were in abasement. The wisest were in darkness.[68]

No longer able to obtain support from the earlier institutions, religion had attached itself to the piecemeal despotism constructed from their remains. Ceasing to be the faith of a nation, it became the faith of a court and of a camp, whose sovereigns it accepted as its chosen deities. Augustus feigned to decline the divine honors offered him.[69] But Tiberius referred to the example of Augustus as a precedent for confessing his own divinity.[70] Only

[68] "In order," remarks Ireland, (Paganism and Christianity, p. 47, note,) referring to the loftier passages in the Heathen writers, "to discover their real value, we must bring them to their own standard, and interpret them upon principles strictly Pagan." "Loqui bene potuerunt," says Lactantius, of the Heathen, "ut homines eruditi; vere autem nullo modo, quia veritatem non didicerunt ab Eo qui ejus potens esset." Div. Inst., III. 1.

[69] Suet., Aug., 52.

[70] Tac., Ann., IV. 37. He added, however, "Ego me mortalem esse et hominum officia fungi, satisque habere, si locum principem impleam, et vos testor, et meminisse posteros volo." Id., ib., 38.

one of the fourteen Emperors, whose names have been recorded in our pages, preserved the show of mortality.[71] The others[72] not only claimed the veneration of men, but in many instances assumed a majesty superior to that of the ancient divinities in their heavens. Nor was it the sovereign alone who received the adoration of his fellow-mortals. His generals, his courtiers, his very concubines, were worshipped at shrines more sumptuous than those of old.[73] The falsehoods reacted upon the religion by which they were tolerated. No other deities might be so abjectly worshipped as the imperial. None, however, could be so totally disbelieved. Nor would the worshipper at their altars retain his belief in even the elder immortals.[74] As a Christian of the next century wrote, "there was no god left to teach truth to the Heathen."[75]

There were times when the end of all things appeared to have arrived. Such were the days when Nero reigned, "oppressing," as the Christian

[71] Vespasian. Eckhel (Doct. Num. Vet., tom. VI. p. 338,) describes the coins which bear his name as that of a deity.

[72] Especially Caligula. Joseph., Ant., XIX. 2. 5. Philo, De Virt., pp. 556 *et seq.* Sen., De Ira, I. 16, 29. Suet., Cal., 22. Dion Cass., LIX. 28.

[73] Tac., Ann., III. 72, IV. 2, 7. Suet., Vitell., 2. Dion Cass., LIX. 11. Thrasea Pætus, for having doubted the divinity of Nero's Poppæa, was accused in this wise: "Spernit religiones, abrogat leges." Tac., Ann., XVI. 22.

[74] Even as early as the reign of Augustus, it was complained that the gods were neglected on his account. Id., ib., I. 10. The statues of Tiberius, in Greece, were regarded as holier than those of Jupiter. Philost., Vit. Apoll. Tyan., I. 15.

[75] "Ethnici quos penes nulla est veritatis plenitudo, quia nec doctor veritatis Deus, malum ac bonum pro arbitrio ac libidine interpretantur, alibi bonum quod alibi malum, et alibi malum quod alibi bonum." Tertullian., De Spect., 21. The Heathen poet might well exclaim against the "Dominæ fastidia Romæ." Martial, Ep., I. 4.

of Rome afterwards wrote, "innocence, honor, liberty."[76] The very capital, the very rulers acknowledged by a subject universe, seemed on the point of perishing in the flames supposed to have been kindled by the raging sovereign. While he looked down from a tower upon the devastation of the city, its inhabitants hurried to the sepulchres without the falling walls. Six days and nights the conflagration spread, devouring the monuments that bound the living to the years which had departed.[77] It needed but little excitability of temperament to believe in the approaching end of the world.[78] Within the world, as it existed, the Heathen subject had found no liberty.

[76] "Tempore quo jam omnis innocentia, omnis pudor, omnisque libertas sub Neronis laborabat imperio." Leo Magnus, Sermo LXXXII. ed. Migne.

[77] Tac., Ann., XV. 38 – 41. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., 16 – 18. Suet., Ner., 38.

[78] Plin., Nat. Hist., VII. 16.

CHAPTER VI.

LIBERTY OF THE CHRISTIAN SUBJECT.

"As long as there is life in the plant, though it be sadly pent in, it will grow towards any opening of light that may be left for it."

Friends in Council, Book I. p. 40.

WHAT the Heathen could not achieve had been achieved, as we have read, for the Christian. The disciples whom the Saviour chose, the converts whom His Apostles called, were invested with the liberty of the subject.

This, as has been remarked, did not save its possessors from oppression. They remained beneath the dominion established over them in public or in private. Nor could the possessors of this liberty be spared the trials befalling other men. The doubts the fears, the errors of the times would still encompass the Christians. No exception from the common sufferings of humanity could be granted them. Nor could they obtain deliverance from the afflictions more particularly pressing upon the lower classes of society. The liberty of the subject did not set him free from subjection.

But it raised him above all such subjection as had

existed amongst the Heathen. The higher powers of the Heathen had been in abeyance. Only the lower powers had been put forth even by those called free. The lower and the higher powers of the enslaved had been equally repressed. It was not so with the Christians. Howsoever subjected they were, it was only with regard to their lowest powers that their superiors could restrain them. Their highest powers were their own, under their own control alone. The ruler might claim their bodies. The labors, the exertions that would have made them strong might be forbidden. He might cramp their minds. The studies, the aspirations that would have rendered them cultivated might be prohibited. But he had no sway over their spirits, their hearts. It was impossible for him to stifle their affections. It was impossible for him to overcome their love of man and of God. Thus free to exercise their spiritual powers, the Christians were at liberty in its truest sense. The liberty of the subject opened an escape from every darker form of subjection.

Nor did this liberty stop here. Its tendency was to spread with every generation, with every age. He who kept himself free to exercise his nobler faculties would gradually obtain the freedom to exercise his ordinary faculties. He could not live in faithful love of his fellow-men and of his God without finding more and more room for the development of all his capacities. His intellectual faculties would be enlarged. His physical faculties would be purified. He could bear with agonies

under which stronger men had succumbed. He could ascend to contemplations of which apparently wiser men had never conceived. The expansion of the spiritual powers would lead to a development of all the intellectual, nay, of all the physical powers. It would be a slow process. The culture of the spiritual powers would itself be slow. But the tendency was certain. The result was sure. The liberty of the subject, at first enabling him to exercise his higher powers, would at length enable him to exercise all the powers of his being.

The liberty of the subject had begun with the individual. From him it spread to the community of which he was a member. Vested in a body, it was the same liberty that it had been in the individual. It did not rescue the community from inferiority or from subjugation. But it gave the community the ability to exercise the highest powers with which a society could be endowed. The exercise of these would lead the community, like the individual, to the exercise of all its powers. A certain degree of political independence was gained at once. The Christians could not come together without infringing the Roman statute forbidding associations of any nature except with the express permission of the public authorities.[1] Nor could they choose their ministers or conduct their sacred observances without open offence against the ordinances and priesthoods of the Empire.

[1] See Gieseler's note 5 to the twelfth section of his Manual of Ecclesiastical History.

For a time, the liberty of the community as of the individual amongst the Christian subjects attracted little or no attention. Few men of any note for character or for position had been converted. Besides the Roman magistrate in Cyprus and the Areopagite in Athens, already mentioned in our pages, there were "certain of the chief of Asia," "the chamberlain" of Corinth, and some "of Cæsar's household."[2] The conversion of the imperial attendants in any number or in any high rank would have led at once to the recognition of the Christians. But it is not probable that any influential members of the imperial court were even accosted, much more converted by the Apostles at Rome. Nor would many of any class be found to listen to the strangers discoursing of a new faith or of a new liberty. Other converts of distinction may have been made by the different Apostles in their various spheres of action. The large majority, however, of their disciples were undoubtedly of as little importance as the teachers themselves in the eyes of the ruling classes.[3] Had the Christians begun by making converts of the distinguished or the powerful, the forces mustered against them would have been well-nigh irresistible.

As it was, they provoked no fears, no immediate passions. If noticed at all by the subjects around them, it was with scornful recklessness. "They were men," says the Roman Tacitus at a later

[2] Acts, xix. 31. Rom., xvi. 23. Phil., i. 13, iv. 22.

[3] Οὐτελεῖς ἄνδρες καὶ ἰδιῶται. Eus., Dem. Ev., iii. 5.

period, "abhorred for their infamies, and called Christians by the common people. The name was taken from Christ, who was executed by Pontius Pilate, the Procurator during the reign of Tiberius. The atrocious superstition, repressed for the moment, again broke forth not only in Judea, where it had its source, but even in our city, where all atrocious and shameful things flow in from all sides and obtain currency. Some were seized who confessed.[4] Then, by their testimony, a great multitude were convicted . . . . even of hatred towards the human race." After recounting the mockeries and torments with which the Christians were put to death, the historian concludes his animadversions by remarking that the only pity to be felt for men "deserving to pay the heaviest penalties," arose from their having fallen, "to satisfy the ferocity of a single man, rather than to secure the good of the people."[5] The scorn of the Heathen for the Christians could hardly have had more forcible expression.[6]

If the Christians went unnoticed by their fellow-subjects, they would go still more unnoticed by their sovereigns. The imperial biographer adverts to tumults excited at Rome in the reign of Claudius by Chrestus, a name perhaps intended for that of

[4] That they had taken part in setting fire to Rome, under Nero. It must be remembered that this account is not a contemporary one.

[5] "Tanquam non utilitate publica sed in sævitiam unius absumerentur." Tac., Ann., xv. 44. See Norton on the Genuineness of the Gospels, vol. II. Add. notes, pp. XLIV.–XLVII. 1st ed.

[6] Suetonius follows in the wake of Tacitus, saying, "Afflicti supplicüis Christiani," and adding, "genus hominum superstitionis novæ ac maleficæ." Ner., 16.

Christ. But the sentence of expulsion upon those accused of participating in the disturbances was pronounced upon them as Jews.[7] The Emperor and his officers had no knowledge of the Christians. So the persecution ordered by Nero seems to have been directed not against the Christians so much as against the whole foreign population of Rome.[8] Thirty years afterwards, we find the first indications that the Christians were discerned to be a distinct class. An examination of the so-called relatives of the Saviour[9] before Domitian led to questionings on the Emperor's part "concerning Christ and His kingdom." "It is not earthly," was the reply, "nor of this world, but celestial and angelic; nor will it come before the fulness of time."[10] There was little in this to excite the interest, much more the apprehension of Domitian. Some of the imperial family were condemned on the ground of atheism.[11] But such a charge betrays no onslaught upon Christianity. Nor is the death of many in the reign of Domitian attributable to a persecution of the Christians.[12] It is equally uncertain that there was any intention of favoring them, as such, in the edict

[7] Suet., Claud., 25. See Acts, XVIII. 2.

[8] A. D. 66. Nicephorus Callistus (Hist., II. 37,) calls Nero the first of the combatants against God, ὁ Θεόμαχος πρῶτος. "Tali dedicatore," exclaims Tertullian, "damnationis nostræ etiam gloriamur!" Apol., 5.

[9] Οἱ ἀπὸ γένους τοῦ κυρίου. Eus., III. 20.

[10] Id., ib.

[11] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVII. 14.

[12] "Bruttius relates that many Christians were sacrificed in the fourteenth year of Domitian." Chron. Paschal., ad Ann. 94.

issued by Nerva, prohibiting the accusation of foreign sectaries before the imperial tribunals.[13]

The liberty of the Christian subject was not of a nature, as we have read, to be at once displayed to his fellow-subjects or his sovereigns. Still less was it to be maintained in political movements or in violent revolutions.[14] But its holders felt sure of their immediate work, sure of their ultimate triumph in relation to the dominion under which, as subjects, they were oppressed. "They stood forth," says their historian and advocate, "against the power of the Romans."[15] "And I saw a woman," writes the Apostle surviving at the end of the century, "sit upon a scarlet-colored beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads..... And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great..... And the Angel said unto me,.... The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth, and the woman is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth. And after these things, I saw another Angel come down from Heaven..... And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the Great is fallen! is fallen!.... And I saw another Angel fly in the midst of Heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to

[13] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVIII. 1.

[14] A singular work was published in 1819 by Dr. August Kestner, entitled Die Agape, oder der geheime Weltbund der Christen, von Clemens in Rom unter Domitians Regierung gestiftet. The author wished to prove that Clement had organized a secret league amongst the Christians against the existing institutions of the Empire, and that the league continued down to the reigns of the Antonines.

[15] Eus., Dem. Ev., III. 5.

every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people. . . . . And there were great voices in Heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ. And He shall reign for ever and ever."[16]

They who could see such visions with the Apostle might be subjects; but they were no longer the hopeless, powerless subjects over whom all the ruling classes had hitherto triumphed. They were men to see the wrong of oppression. Fall as they still might beneath it, they could look forward to its extinction. The liberty which they had obtained as subjects was the assurance that the centralization of antiquity had received its doom.

The same liberty disclosed the union that was to appear. Far away glittered the scattered points of light that were yet to gleam in blended refulgence. But they could be seen. Men could watch them as they drew nearer to one another and to the world on which they were to shine. The sight was full of inspiration. Glowing with trust in the liberty to come, with confidence in that already come, the Christians continued their preparation for the union of modern times.

[16] Rev., xvii. 3, 5, 9, 18; xviii. 1, 2; xiv. 6; xi. 15.

BOOK III.

THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

A. D. 100–400.

"But the Empire was strong; if its motive energy was decaying, its *vis inertiæ* was for ages enormous" — De Quincey, *The Cæsars*, p. 139.

BOOK III.

THE ROMAN CHRISTIANS.

CHAPTER I.

ENCOUNTERS.

"What is this but to blow a trumpet, and proclaim a fire-cross to an hereditary and perpetual civil war." — MILTON, *Reform. in Eng.*, Book II.

TRAJAN is Emperor. Amongst his subjects is the rhetorician Dion of Bithynia, surnamed Chrysostomus, the Golden-Mouthed. He addresses himself to his sovereign. "In the first place," he says, "the ruler must be a lover of the gods, inasmuch as he hath obtained his majesty from them."[1] To maintain the faith that was at the summit of the imperial institutions, Dion proposes no new authority. "For the Emperor's power," he remarks, "is absolute. The Emperor's will is law."[2]

The appeal was made to willing ears. No one

[1] De Regno, III. Ed. Reiske, tom. I. p. 116.

[2] *Βασιλεία δὲ, ἀνυπεύθυνος ἀρχή· ὁ δὲ νόμος βασιλέως δόγμα.* Ib., ib., p. 114.

believed in his own supremacy more implicitly than Trajan. Nor was this belief so unfounded in him as it would have been in most of his predecessors. The classes by whom the sovereign had been wont to be swayed, the courtiers and the soldiers of the imperial realms, found a master in the Emperor Trajan.[3] On him, too, the subject classes, the proletary[4] and the provincial,[5] the slave[6] and the criminal,[7] found themselves directly depending. His determination extended beyond the frontier. "I will have Dacia," he was wont to boast, "for my province. I will cross the Danube and the Euphrates."[8]

Were the use of this power to be selfish, Trajan could have discerned no better means of sustaining it than by adherence to the institutions of old. To preserve them was equally serviceable, in case he purposed to turn his authority to generous ends. It was from the relics of the ancient statutes and the ancient magistracies that the founders of the imperial supremacy had constructed it. To preserve and to extend it, Trajan could but resort to the same materials. With this persuasion, he restored many of the forms and the offices which had been overborne in the convulsions of the earlier reigns.[9] The

[3] His measures with regard to the informers and the freedmen of the court are sketched in Plin., Pan., 35, 38.

[4] His measures to support poor children are described by Hegewisch, L'Époque de l'Hist. Rom., App. 5, and by Naudet, Des Secours Publics chez les Rom., Mém. de l'Inst., Acad. Inscr. et Bell. Lett., tom. XIII. pp. 72 *et seq.*, nouv. série. See, also, Eckhel's account of the ancient medals. Doct. Num. Vet., tom. VI. pp. 424, 425.

[5] Plin., Pan., 36–40. Ep., X. 52, 53, 56, 57, 62, 63.

[6] Digest., lib. XL. tit. V., XXVI. 7, and LI. 4, 6, 7.

[7] Ib., lib. XLVIII. tit. XIX., V.

[8] Amm. Marcellinus, XXIV. 3. 9.

[9] Plin., Pan., 60, 67. Dion Cass, ap. Xiph., LXVIII. 16. Eutrop., VIII. 2.

same spirit would show itself in relation to the imperial religion. Its rites would be sustained, its deities defended against the inroads that had been made during the latter years.

Such were the views of the sovereign with whom the Christians first came to open encounters. The Governor of Syria sent to inform Trajan that an aged man had been arraigned before him on the charge of professing the Christian faith. To force the prisoner to abjure it, tortures were tried; but in vain. Ordered to crucifixion, he died with such constancy that the Governor himself was astonished at the fortitude of his victim. The martyr was Simeon, the successor of St. James at Jerusalem.[10]

This was vexatious intelligence for Trajan. Nor was this all of the sort that he received. The very next year apparently, Pliny, then in charge of the northern province of Asia Minor, wrote his often quoted letter to the Emperor. "An anonymous presentment," he says, "containing numerous names, was placed in my hands." Numerous arrests of course ensued. "Of those accused," continues Pliny, "some denied that they were, or that they had been Christians. All who joined with me in invoking the gods, and in sacrificing with incense and wine before your statue, besides blaspheming Christ, I ordered to be discharged, inasmuch as they who are really Christians cannot, it is said, be compelled to do any such things. Others confessing that they had

[10] This was probably in the year 104. Hegesippus, ap. Eus., III. 32.

been Christians, but denying that they were so at this time, ... declared that this was the sum of their guilt or their error, whichever it might be called. They had been accustomed to assemble on a stated day before dawn, when they would sing alternately a hymn to Christ as to a divinity. They would also bind themselves by oath not to commit any sort of crime, neither theft, nor robbery, nor adultery, as well as not to violate their word, or refuse, when called upon, to pay what they owed. This being done, they would separate, and meet again for the purpose of eating a meal in common and without offence. . . . . I thought it necessary, however, to make sure of the facts in the case, by putting two of their maidens, called ministers, to torture. But I discovered nothing besides a wicked and extravagant superstition." The Governor goes on to state the detriment sustained by the temples and the observances of the imperial religion. He had not hesitated, he informs the sovereign, to order all persisting in their Christian professions to be executed, with the exception of such as declared themselves Roman citizens; these he had ordered to be conveyed to Rome. The despatch closes with a reference to the great numbers "of every age, rank, and sex" adhering to the new faith, "from which," concludes Pliny, "a multitude may be reclaimed, provided an opportunity for repentance is allowed."[11]

Had these tidings from the East found Trajan reposing at Rome, he would probably have started up

[11] Plin., Ep., x. 97.

to order the extermination of the Christians. But he was in hot pursuit of the victories on which he had long set his heart, and from which he could not look back with any deep interest upon the movements of his Asian or Syrian subjects. He was content with moderate measures. "You have done as you ought," he writes to Pliny, "in examining the cases of those arraigned before you as Christians. Yet there is no single rule that can at all times be observed. They must not be sought out. But if they are accused and convicted, they must be punished. Whoever, on the other hand, shall deny that he is a Christian, and make this manifest by his deeds, in other words, by sacrificing to our gods, he, although previously suspected, shall by his repentance obtain pardon. But anonymous informations are not to be received in relation to any charge; for they are the worst precedents, as well as the least appropriate to our times."[12] The flies, as Trajan thought them, that buzzed about his chariot, were thus, he believed, to be brushed away. He had given much the same directions to Pliny in prohibiting the formation of a company of firemen at Nicomedia.[13] Or if the Emperor supposed the Christians to be of too great consequence to be so easily disposed of, he would still have postponed a more direct encounter with them until his foes upon the borders were overcome.

[12] Plin., Ep., x. 98. See Eus., III. 33. The date of these letters was probably 105.

[13] Plin., Ep., x. 42, 43.

Still on his march, Trajan arrived at Antioch. The accounts concerning his Christian subjects have become more formidable. He must turn aside, he finds, from his preparations for conquest abroad, to beat down the independence that is showing itself at home. He orders the head of the Antioch community to be brought before him.

This was Ignatius. In his youth he is said to have been the disciple of the principal Apostles.[14] In his later years, he is represented as the peculiar champion of the supremacy to which the authorities appointed by the Apostles were entitled in their respective communities.[15] A man of resolution and of inspiration, Ignatius was admirably adapted to sustain the liberty of the Christians against the imperial power. The report of his examination before Trajan is far from being entirely trustworthy. But it recalls the angry Emperor and the devoted Christian in much the same guise that they must have worn before guards and wondering spectators around the imperial tribunal.

"Who is this evil spirit," asked Trajan, "that hath not only disobeyed my commands to sacrifice before the gods, but persuaded others to their destruction?" "No one," answers Ignatius, "can call a Theophorus an evil spirit." "And who is Theophorus?" "It is he," replies the Christian, "who carries Christ within his breast." "Do we then," haughtily rejoins the Emperor, "appear to thee to

[14] Butler (Lives of the Saints, Feb. 1, St. Ignatius, note 2,) gives the authorities.

[15] See his so-called Epistles, especially those to the Magnesians and Ephesians.

have no gods with whom we can confront our adversaries?" "You are wrong in calling your spirits by the name of gods," says Ignatius; "there is but one God, who made the heavens, the earth, the sea and all things in them; and there is but one Christ Jesus, His Only Begotten Son, whose grace I am to enjoy." "Meanest thou him who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?" "Him," answers Ignatius, "who hath crucified sin and placed all evil spirits beneath the feet of those who bear Him in their hearts." "Dost thou, then, carry about Christ within thee?" "Even so," responds the Christian.

Now that Trajan had actually encountered his Christian subjects, he determined that the effect should not be lost, either upon them or upon the Heathen around them. Instead of being punished at Antioch, Ignatius was sentenced to be carried in chains to Rome, in order to perish in sight, as it were, of the whole Empire. "I thank Thee, Lord," exclaims the Christian, "that Thou has allowed me to receive this honor in love for Thee, thus to be bound with Thine Apostle Paul!" Clasping his chains, and praying for the Church at Antioch with tears, Ignatius was led away by the surrounding soldiery.[16]

Farther than this, it may not be safe to follow the traditions concerning the martyrdom of Ignatius. Nor can we turn with entire confidence to the Epistles which purport to have been written during his

[16] Ruinart, Acta Scti Ign., 2, 3. Eus., III. 36. The year is doubtful. It was either 107 or 116.

voyage to Rome, in prospect of impending death. Yet here again we find passages true to the fortitude with which the steadfast Christian would naturally encounter persecution. "From Syria to Rome, I am fighting with wild beasts, by land and sea, by night and day, being bound to ten leopards, that being the number of the soldiers with me, who, even when kindly treated, become more cruel. But in the midst of these wrongs, I am learning more..... Now I am beginning to be a believer. Nothing of things visible or invisible can now prevent me from enjoying Christ. Fire and the cross, herds of beasts, cuts, divisions, scatterings of bones, swoons, bruises on every limb, the bitter tortures of the evil one, may come upon me, provided only that I enjoy Jesus Christ."[17] Still stronger are the expressions of "desire for death."[18] "I have no wish to live any longer after the manner of men; and this will continue to be my feeling, if ye will but agree with me. ..... I beseech you not to have any unseasonable affection towards me. Let me become the food of the wild beasts; for it is through them that I shall enjoy God."[19]

Other Christians are said to have met with martyrdom.[20] The encounters which they had had with their sovereign and his ministers could not but be followed by encounters with their fellow-subjects. No sooner was it once decided by Trajan that the

[17] Ad Rom., 5. The passage is cited by Eus., III. 36.
[18] Ad Rom., 7.
[19] Ad Rom., 8, 4.
[20] Eus., III. 36. Tillemont, Hist. des Empereurs, tom. II. pp. 228, 236, 238.

refusal to offer sacrifice to him or to the Heathen deities was punishable by death,[21] than the wide Empire must have rung with assaults upon the Christians. The effect upon the persecutors was to increase their dependence on the ruler whom they were serving in a new capacity. But what they lost was more than compensated by what the persecuted gained in point of liberty. Not all endeavored to prove themselves free. But such as did, succeeded. The liberty of the Christians expanded with struggles akin to those beneath which the liberty of the Heathen had dwindled to extinction.

The reign of Trajan closes. The passage of the Danube, leading to the nominal conquest of Dacia, had been celebrated by protracted festivities at Rome.[22] New wars had been kindled. The Euphrates had been crossed on the way to victory over the Parthians.[23] But the regions behind the imperial conqueror had become restless. Obliged to rouse himself from his dreams of Eastern conquests, Trajan dies on his way back to Rome.[24]

[21] "A, l'Antique Olympe immolant l'Evangile."
VICTOR HUGO.

[22] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVIII. 6 *et seq.*

[23] Id., ib., LXVIII. 19 *et seq.* Eutr., VIII. 2.

[24] In the year 117. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XIII. 10. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXVIII. 33.

CHAPTER II.

IMPERIAL ASSAULTS.

"And while the bloody past is justified,
Thou all the surelier dost work against
The men to come."

BROWNING.

PUBLIUS ÆLIUS HADRIANUS, related to Trajan by birth and marriage, succeeded to his kinsman.[1] After ruling twenty-one years, he was followed by Titus Aurelius Fulvius Antoninus, amongst whose titles that of Pius was preëminent. He reigned twenty-three years.[2] His nephew and adopted son, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus,[3] was the Emperor of the next nineteen years.

The period during which Hadrian and the Antonines[4] held the sway at Rome has been regarded as the golden age of the Empire. "One no longer

[1] The son of Trajan's aunt, he married Trajan's grand-niece. Spart., Had., 1, 2. He became Emperor in 117. Id., ib., 4. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIX. 1.

[2] 138 – 161. His family was from Nemausus (Nismes). Capit., Ant., 2.

[3] 161 – 180.

[4] With colleagues, L. Ceionius Commodus, selected by Hadrian, and his son L. Aurelius Verus, adopted by Antoninus Pius in obedience to Hadrian's commands. Spart., Æl. Ver., 5. Capit., Ant., 24.

wonders," exclaims the rhetorician Ælius Aristides, "that the wide world is subject to such a power. ..... More accordantly than those of a chorus are our voices united in praying that this dominion may endure forever, so gloriously is it administered by its fearless ruler."[5] The ruler himself, the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, uses a different language. "Go back," he says, "no farther than the time of Trajan. Its spirit is utterly departed..... The very names of those once most renowned are now nothing but words that need to be explained."[6] "Thou wilt soon," he warns himself, "be dust and bones. Nor will aught remain of thee besides a name, perhaps not even that..... Why, then, attempt so much? Why venture upon anything besides the worship of gods and the care of men, bearing and forbearing with them as they are?"[7] Not all the homages lavished upon sovereigns, worthy in many respects to be praised, could blind their eyes or those of their clearer-sighted subjects to the omens with which the times abounded. The age of gold was seen even then to be an age of decline.

The consciousness of this decline explains the policy pursued by Hadrian and his successors. All the three devoted themselves to the concentration of their resources with an earnestness which could not have existed but for a prevailing sense of present or of future insecurity.

Hadrian began by recalling the legions from be-

[5] In Rom. Orat., tom. I. pp. 199, 206, ed. Jebb.

[6] De Seipso, IV. 21, 22.

[7] Ib., V. 25.

yond the Euphrates, and acknowledging the king whom Trajan had deposed, to be the lawful monarch of Parthia.[8] In Britain, Hadrian built a wall to keep off the northern mountaineers,[9] while on the other boundaries of his realms he encountered the foe with gold as frequently as with arms.[10] Similar steps were taken by Antoninus Pius to preserve peace upon the frontier, but they were less successful.[11] Marcus Aurelius, a lover of contemplation as well as of authority, would have gladly saved himself from wars. But the Parthians broke in on the East.[12] On the south, the race of the Mauri, whose ancestors had fought under Tacfarinas the Numidian, crossed the seas with fire and sword to Spain.[13] On the north, the long line of the tribes beyond the Danube, "from Illyria," says the biographer, "as far as Gaul," provoked the most terrible war against which it had been necessary to defend the Empire.[14]

The failure of the imperial policy abroad rendered its prosecution all the more imperative at home. A series of tours exhibited to Hadrian the means upon which he could rely, as well as the wants which he must repair.[15] After remitting various

[8] Spart., Had., 5. Eutr., VIII. 3.

[9] Spart., Had., 11.

[10] Id., ib., 6. "Pacis magis quam belli cupidus, ... omnes reges muneribus vicit." Id., ib., 10, 17. So Aur. Vict., Epit., XIV. 10, and Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIX. 15.

[11] Capit., Ant., 5, 9. See Tillemont, Hist. des Emp., tom. II. p. 349.

[12] 162–165. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXI. 2.

[13] 170. Capit., Ant. Phil., 21.

[14] 167–175 and 178–180. Capit., Ant. Phil., 22. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXI. 3 *et seq.*

[15] 119–136. Spart., Had., 10 *et seq.* Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIX. 9 *et seq.*

taxes that had been laid upon some of his subjects, he forgave at once the arrears of sixteen years.[16] Such as had sunk below the level of tax-payers were in their turn relieved. The offspring of the poor were succored.[17] The slave was rescued from the absolute power of his master.[18] Nor did the higher subjects go without their tokens of consideration. The laws which they valued were renewed.[19] The offices to which they clung were honored.[20] It did not, however, further the system thus far pursued by Hadrian, that his latter years were spent in deeds of madness and despotism. Antoninus Pius resumed the measures thus interrupted.[21] At the same time he found himself obliged to interfere with the higher orders. Nor could the lower be governed without the employment of severity.[22] The task before Marcus Aurelius was still more difficult. To the losses resulting from warfare were superadded the miseries arising from famine and pestilence. All that could be was tried. The legions were filled with any recruits that could be found, whether aliens or slaves. Such of the foes as could not be

[16] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIX. 8. "Very many were relieved even from tribute," says the amazed chronicler. Eusebius, Ad Ann. CXIX. So Orelli, Inscr. Lat. Sel., 805.

[17] Spart., Had., 7.

[18] "Eosque," says the imperial biographer, (Id., ib.,) "jussit damnari per judices si digni essent."

[19] As in the Perpetual Edict. Mackeldey, Man. of Rom. Law, Introd., § 42.

[20] As were the Jurists. Digest., lib. I. tit. II., II. 47. Spart., Had., 18. And the Senate, Id., ib., 7, 8, 22. Digest., lib. XLIX. tit. II., I. 2. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIX. 2, 5, 7.

[21] A more comprehensive edict carried out the orders of Hadrian concerning the slave. Digest., lib. I. tit. VI. 1, 2. Or Instit., I. VIII. 2. So Gaius, I. 53.

[22] Capit., Ant., 2, 5. Aur. Vict., Cæs., 13, 14. On the conspiracies of the reign, see Capit., Ant., 7. Aur. Vict., Epit., XV. 9.

drawn into the imperial service were settled upon the imperial territory.[23] To meet the demands upon the exchequer, the Emperor ordered the ornaments of his palace to be sold,[24] at the same time that he remitted the arrears which his subjects could could not discharge.[25] But it was in vain. "Marcus Antoninus," wrote one of his own generals who had risen in rebellion, "is philosophizing concerning clemency, and intellect, and honor, and justice, without thinking about public affairs."[26] Nor did the Emperor kindle a spark of sympathy when he discoursed in public upon the different doctrines to which he would have his subjects give their heed.[27]

The concentration of resources thus attempted by the sovereigns seems to have been suggested by the encounters of their predecessor with his Christian subjects. From the moment that these were discerned to be in possession of a liberty neither claimed nor known by any besides, the imperial centralization appears to have been considered in peril. The Christians could not be actually feared. But their existence, their increase seemed to betoken the decline of the imperial power.

The contrast between the Christians and their fellow-subjects was strong enough to excite remark

[23] Capit., Ant. Phil., 21, 24.

[24] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., (with Reimar's note,) LXXI. 23.

[25] Capit., Ant. Phil., 17. Aur. Vict., Epit., XVI. 9.

[26] Vulc. Gall., Avid. Cass., 14. Aurelius proved that he had been philosophizing to some purpose by lamenting the death of the rebel, whose relatives he spared. Id., ib., 12, 13. Capit., Ant. Phil., 25, 26. Dion Cass., ap Xiph., LXXI. 27, 28

[27] Capit., Ant. Phil., 23. Vulc. Gall., Avid. Cass., 3. So the religious rites not only of the Roman religion, but of other religions, were publicly performed. Capit., Ant. Phil., 13.

if not apprehension. Other subjects were humbled. Even the classes previously ruling had submitted to the recent Emperors. The lower classes were still more submissive than they had ever been. From West to East the Christians were the only subjects to falter in allegiance to the Empire.

One other exception appears. It is in Judea, where exception after exception to the fortunes of almost every generation had already appeared. A revolt of Jews in Africa during Trajan's reign had spread to Cyprus and as far as Mesopotamia. The efforts of the insurgents having been decisively overpowered by Hadrian, he issued directions for the settlement of a colony under a Roman name at Jerusalem.[28] A prohibition of the rite of circumcision soon ensued.[29] But the traditions of Jewish independence, escaping the havoc of the sacred city, had found refuge in the schools, especially in that of Tiberias in Galilee. Of this the head at the present time was the Rabbi Akiba. A second Moses, as his countrymen called him,[30] the leader and the lawgiver of his race in their later bondage, Akiba was the master-spirit of their last national insurrection. Too old, however, to conduct to battle the forces gathered by him, he chose a chieftain to whom he gave the name of Barcocebas, Son of the Star. The rebellion, started with the massacre of the colonists at Jerusalem, was prosecuted

[28] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIX. 12.

[29] Spart., Had., 21.

[30] Salvador, Hist. de la Dom. Rom. en Judée, tom. II. pp. 544 *et seq.*

for several years with terrible passion on both sides.[31] Jerusalem, however, was soon retaken from the insurgents. But they held other places longer; nor was their last stronghold captured without a protracted siege. Barcocebas perished sword in hand. Akiba, put to frightful tortures, repeated the name of Jehovah until his breath ceased. Hundreds of thousands[32] of his race had been slain; as many more, probably, died in misery, if not in servitude. Jerusalem was compelled to resume its Roman name; and they who had been wont to kneel amidst its downcast walls were forbidden to approach it again. The permission to circumcise themselves was recovered by the Jews in the following reign. A longer time elapsed before the restoration of Tiberias as the seat of the so-called Patriarch. Not even then was it the centre of the nation. There was another head in the Prince of the Captivity. His throne was fixed in Babylon.[33] So severed, so humbled were the Jews.

The Christians remained. Unsubdued by the encounters of the preceding period, they were regarded as offensive if not dangerous both to their fellow-subjects and to their sovereigns. It was but natural that they should become the objects of assaults more terrible than any which they had as yet sus-

[31] 131–136. The Christians were amongst the sufferers by the war. Justin Martyr, Apol., I. 31.

[32] Five hundred and eighty thousand, not counting those who died "by hunger, disease or fire." Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXIX. 14. "Ultima cæde perdomuit," says Orosius, (VII. 13) in relation to Hadrian's victories.

[33] On the Patriarch and the Prince, see Milman's Hist. Jews, book XIX.

tained. These assaults may be called imperial. For they were dictated by the passions as well as supported by the resources of those attached or bound to the imperial institutions.

But the Emperors were not the instigators or the leaders. On the contrary, they were inclined to temporize with their Christian subjects. "I have become acquainted with Egypt," writes Hadrian to his brother-in-law, the Consul Seranus. "And I have found it volatile," he adds, "changing with every moment's rumor. They who worship Serapis are Christians; and they who call themselves the Bishops of Christ are the votaries of Serapis. Every Jewish priest, every Samaritan, every Christian, assumes to be an astrologer, a soothsayer, and a teacher..... They have one and the same god," probably alluding to their own interest, "and that is none at all, though worshipped by Christians, Jews, and all men."[34] It was in this spirit, disposed to make light of their doctrines,[35] that Hadrian sat in judgment upon his Christian subjects. "I'm unwilling," he wrote to Minucius Fundanus, the Proconsul of Asia, "to pass by this matter in silence; for I do not choose that the innocent should be persecuted, or that an opportunity of pursuing their trade should be given to the informers. If, then,

[34] "Unus illis Deus nullus est. Hunc Christiani, hunc Judæi, hunc omnes venerantur et gentes." Flav. Vopisc., Saturn., 8. "Sacra Romana," says the imperial biographer of Hadrian, "diligentissime curavit, peregrina contempsit." Spart., Had., 22.

[35] The fact that Hadrian prohibited images in many of his temples, may be taken as a sign of a more earnest spirit in him. Lamprid., Alex. Sev., 44.

the people in your province can prove their charges against the Christians so as to involve them in criminal conduct, I do not forbid their prosecution. But I will not allow mere imprecations or idle clamors to carry the day. . . . . Should any one, therefore, bring an accusation before you, and show that the men aforesaid have done anything contrary to law, you will pronounce your sentence according to the crime. But take heed that you are to subject any accuser who shall make a charge of this sort without foundation, to much severer penalties than those to which you would sentence the accused."[36] The same instructions were communicated to the governors of the other provinces.[37]

The temporizing policy of Hadrian appears to have been imitated by both Antoninus Pius[38] and Marcus Aurelius.[39] "I have imagined to myself," says the latter, "a republic administered on principles of freedom and equality. I have dreamed of a monarchy respecting the liberty of the subject above all things besides."[40] But he was more earnest when he wrote against "the sheer contumacy,"[41] as he styles it, that had been displayed by the Christians. "See," he says to himself, "see that thou dost not un-Cæsar thyself."[42]

[36] Eus., IV. 9. Just. Mart., Apol., I. 69.

[37] Melito, ap. Eus., IV. 26.

[38] The terms in which he is said to have forbidden persecution are not properly attested. Melito, as above.

[39] See the citation from the Acta Symphoriani in Neander's Hist. Church, vol. I. p. 108. The story of the Thundering Legion may be traced in Eus., V. 5, and Tillemont, Hist. des Emp., tom. II. pp. 407, 409.

[40] De Seipso, I. 11.

[41] Φιλὴν παράταξιν. De Seipso, XI. 3.

[42] Ὅρα μὴ ἀποκαισαρωθῇς. Ib., VI. 23.

Where Cæsars were, there were also martyrs.[43] Especially where the martyrs suffered from the passions of their fellow-subjects even more than from those of their sovereigns. "Ye are your own murderers," exclaimed the Heathen.[44] "But to live with you," replied the Christians, "is death eternal. Nor is our life lost," they would add, "but changed for the better."[45] The early historian, himself a sufferer from subsequent persecution, exults over the narrative which he is rehearsing. "Others," he remarks, "composing historical relations, have chosen to discourse concerning victories and trophies, the exploits of the general and those of his soldiers, stained though they were with blood and innumerable murders, on account of their children, their country, or their possessions. But our history, in relating achievements in the service of God, will describe that bloodless warfare which hath been undertaken for the peace of the soul. It will bring forward those who have striven for the truth more than for their country, and for piety more than for their dearest friends."[46]

The assaults upon the Christians began under Hadrian.[47] Continuing under Antoninus Pius,[48] they

[43] "Porque si no hubiera tiranos, no hubiera martires." Luis de Granada, Del Simbolo de la Fe, Parte II. cap. 28.

[44] *Πάντες οὖν ἑαυτοὺς φονεύσαντες.* Just., Apol., II. 4.

[45] "Vobiscunque vivere, mors est æterna. . . . . Ita enim mihi vita non tollitur, sed mutatur in melius." Such were the words of Epipodius, who suffered martyrdom in Gaul during the reign of Aurelius." Acta, ap. Ruinart, tom. I. pp. 166, 167.

[46] Eus., v. proem.

[47] See the touching story of Symphorosa and her seven sons. Acta, ap. Ruinart, tom. I. pp. 49 *et seq.*

[48] When Felicitas and her chil-

attained to their full force under Marcus Aurelius. His reign furnishes several instances demanding more particular attention.

The first introduces us into domestic scenes. Some years before, as it seems, a Roman lady of rank had been converted to Christianity. After vainly attempting to reclaim her husband from the licentious courses which she herself had abandoned, she left him. He, on the other hand, incensed at her desertion of him, accused her before the authorities of being a Christian. This leads us from the household to the public tribunals. An appeal from the accused to the Emperor, according to the usual form, suspended the trial. At this, the indignant husband brought a second accusation against the teacher who had wrought his wife's conversion.

The teacher was a certain Ptolemy. After long confinement, he was brought before the Præfect to answer to the question, "Art thou a Christian?" He confessed, as he had done on his arrest; and the trial was ended. A convert, named Lucius, hearing the sentence of death, exclaimed against its injustice. "Thou, then," cried out the Præfect, "art one of the same crew!" "Most undoubtedly," answered Lucius. As he, too, was ordered to execution, he raised his voice once more to thank the judge for delivering him from wicked masters to his Father and his King in Heaven. Another still, says

dren appear to have perished. Acta, ap. Ruinart, tom. I. pp. 54 *et seq.* Other sufferers at this time are alluded to in Eus., IV. 12; Just. Mart., Apol., I. 5 – 7; and an inscription cited by Blouino, Persécutions de l'Église, tom. I. p. 221.

our narrator, on being brought before the Præfect, was doomed to the same fate. It may have been the wife for whose conversion Ptolemy and Lucius had thus suffered.[49]

"And I likewise," continues Justin, who relates these martyrdoms, "I likewise am expecting to be taken and carried to the stake. . . . . They massacre us: the demons and the wicked triumph. Yet they would not triumph even for an instant, unless every man were destined from his birth to die. So do we give thanks when we meet our destiny. . . . . For myself," he exclaims, "I have scorned all else, despising the opinions of the multitude, while praying and in every way striving, I confess, to be proved a Christian."[50] He was not obliged to wait long. Arraigned at Rome before the Præfect Rusticus, Justin was ordered to comply with the imperial edict commanding sacrifice to be made "every where and by all men" to the Heathen gods. The boldness with which the Christian had remonstrated upon the injustice of such proceedings against others did not desert him in his own peril. To the Præfect's imperious behests he serenely replied that no one who obeyed the commandments of Jesus Christ the Saviour could be rightfully accused or condemned. "Art thou, then, a Christian?" asked Rusticus. "Assuredly," answered Justin.[51]

The same question was put to each of those who had been apprehended with him. One replies: "I

[49] Just. Mart., Apol., II. 2. Probably in 163 or 164.

[50] Id., ib., II. 3, 11, 13.

[51] Acta, ap. Ruinart, 1, 2.

am a Christian with the aid of God." Another, apparently the wife of the first, makes a similar response. A third answers more at length: "I am Cæsar's slave. But as a Christian, I have been set free by Christ Himself, through whose grace I have been permitted to share in the same hope that doth sustain my companions." [52] A fourth responds: "I, too, am surely a Christian; for I worship and adore the same God." The same confession is made by a fifth, who declares that he received this excellent faith from his parents. A sixth gives a similar statement. Whereupon the Præfect asks one of them where his parents resided. "Our true father," answers the Christian, "is Christ, and our mother is the faith which we have in Him." A seventh prisoner then adds his confession that he also is a Christian.[53]

The Præfect now returns to Justin. It may have been from a humane desire to save the lives of men whose bravery must have appeared to be wasted on a vain delusion. It may have been from a cruel pleasure in sporting with the sufferings of victims already adjudged to die. "Dost thou think, then," asks the Heathen magistrate, "that after being slain by the scourge, thou wilt ascend to Heaven?" "I trust," says the Christian prisoner, "to receive the reward prepared for such as have kept the faith of Christ, after I shall have suffered the death whereof thou speakest." "And wilt thou be rewarded?"

[52] "Every subject's duty is the king's; but every subject's soul is his own." *Henry V.*

[53] Acta, as before, 3.

"I doubt not," answers Justin. "But come," urges the Præfect, "agree together, and sacrifice to the gods..... Unless ye do so, ye shall suffer torture." "Especially," rejoins Justin, "do we desire to suffer for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ." And his companions speak up: "Deal quickly as thou wilt with us; for we are Christians, and to idols we make no sacrifice."[54] The Præfect instantly gave directions that they should be scourged and then beheaded. Some Christians of the city stole to the spot where the sentence had been executed, and bore away the mangled remains of their teacher and their friends to give them burial.[55]

The assaults upon the Christians were not confined to Rome. An old man, said to have walked with the Apostles in his youth,[56] was still living at the head of the Christian community in Smyrna. Long, therefore, must have been his expectation of suffering for the cause to which his life had been devoted. "If we be afflicted," he himself had written, "for the sake of Jesus Christ, let us imitate His endurance and glorify Him! For this commandment hath He given to us; and in this have we believed."[57] He who wrote thus was the Bishop Polycarp.

It was the Easter season when some of his flock at Smyrna were put to death. Yielding at first to the solicitations of his friends, he withdrew from the city where a hue and cry had already been raised

[54] Acta, as before, 4.
[55] Ib., ib., 5. The year was probably 166. Chron. Pasch.
[56] Irenæus, Adv. Hær., III. 3. 4. Hieron., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 17.
[57] Ad Philipp., 8.

against him. But as soon as he discovered that he was pursued, he waited for those who came after him "with horses and arms," says the ancient narrative, "as though they had been searching for a robber." Some still pressed him to fly farther. "God's will be done!" he answered. "As long as He willed it, I sought to escape; but now that He hath ordered it, I desire to die." An hour for prayer was all the delay that he asked from his captors before they hurried him back to death at Smyrna.[58]

In the midst of the uproar occasioned by his reappearance, Polycarp was brought before the Proconsul, Statius Quadratus. "Art thou Polycarp?" asks the representative of the Emperor. "I am." "Remember thy infirmities, then," rejoins the Proconsul, "and swear by the Fortune of Cæsar! .... Swear, and I will release thee! Revile thy Christ!" "Eighty-six years," exclaims Polycarp, "have I served Him, and He has never done me wrong; how, then, can I revile my King and my Saviour?" Quadratus insists; but Polycarp still refuses. "Then persuade the people to spare thee," says the second Pilate, unwilling to oppose the fury of the populace, though it were but the populace of Smyrna. "To thee," replies the follower of Christ, "to thee I have thought it fit to offer a defence; for we have been taught to give to the magistrates and powers ordained by God the honor that belongs to them, if we can do so without injury to ourselves.

[58] Epist. Eccl. Smyrnensis, 3–7.

But these," pointing to the multitude, "these men I do not consider to have any claim upon me that I should defend myself before them." Undismayed by the menaces of the Proconsul or by the savage clamors of "Jews and Heathen," as they are termed, Polycarp saw the pile prepared. He asked but a single favor of his executioners, that he might not be nailed to the stake, from which, he promised, he would not attempt to move.[59]

No human spirit ever breathed a diviner prayer than that which Polycarp uttered with hands clasped behind him as he was bound amidst the preparations for his execution. "Lord God," he cried, "Universal Ruler, Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained knowledge of Thee, God of Angels, of Powers, of the whole Creation and of all the generations of the righteous living in Thy sight, I bless Thee that Thou hast thought me deserving of this day and of this hour; that Thou dost allow me to obtain a place amongst Thy martyrs and a share in the cup of Thy Christ, unto the resurrection of everlasting life, both of the soul and of the body in the immortality of the Holy Spirit. I pray that I may be received before Thee amongst Thy martyrs as a worthy and acceptable sacrifice, according as Thou, the True and Only God, hast ordained and fulfilled. For this and for all things I praise Thee, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, with the eternal and celestial Jesus Christ, Thy well-beloved Son, through whom

[59] Epist. Eccles. Smyrn., 8–12.

to Thee be glory both now and in all coming ages! Amen." [60]

The spirit thus triumphing over mortal cruelties in hope of immortal blessings was soon released from earth by the flames of the burning pile.[61] They who had clamored for the execution now demanded with unabated violence that the remains of Polycarp should not be given up to his flock. The Christians, however, succeeded in gathering his bones, "more precious than precious stones and more costly than gold." These they buried where they could meet together, as they wrote, in memory of the trials that were past, and in preparation for the sufferings that might be at hand.[62] The last rites being thus performed, the Christians of Smyrna addressed a letter to their fellow-believers "in every place," recounting the martyrdoms of which their city had been the scene. "All things," they write, "that have happened were predicted by the Lord. . . . . He hath wished us to be His imitators, ... having so formed and instructed us that we should save not ourselves alone, but our brethren likewise." [63] The liberty established by the law of love could have no truer expression.

Not many years afterwards, a letter of similar character was addressed by "the servants of Christ at Vienne and Lyons," in Gaul, to their "brethren in

[60] Ep., 14, in the Greek version, 12, in the Latin.

[61] Ἐνδόξως καὶ ἐπιφανέστατα μαρτυρήσας, "having borne himself most gloriously as a martyr." Iren., Adv. Hær., III. 3. 4.

[62] Epist. Eccles. Smyrn., 13, 14, and in the Greek version, 17, 18.

[63] Ib., 1. The year was probably 167.

Asia and Phrygia." "We cannot tell," declare the writers, "nor is it possible to describe the magnitude of our tribulation or the fury of the Heathen against our converts."[64] Stonings in the streets and blockades in their private dwellings were but a few forms of the violence from which the Christians at Vienne and Lyons had been suffering. Some of them being seized at Lyons were arraigned before the municipal authorities, by whom they were placed in confinement to wait the coming of the imperial governor. On his arrival the prisoners were called before him to renounce their faith or to suffer death. Many not yet apprehended followed their brethren to the tribunal, cheering the strong in their resistance and reproaching the feeble for their submission. Arrests and sentences multiplied. New converts and old, the young believer and the aged priest, citizens, provincials and slaves were taken together and together doomed amid the outcries of the populace and the soldiery. The whole Christian community was become the object of persecution.

Amongst those against whom "the wrath," as it was described, "of multitude and governor and troops" rose highest, was a female slave, by name Blandina. "In her," wrote the survivors and the narrators of the persecution, "in her Christ made it manifest that what appears worthless, unsightly and despicable to men may be by God judged worthy of great honor on account of love manifested in

[64] Ap. Eus., v. 1. The year is supposed to have been 177.

sincerity towards Him." All were trembling for her resolution, and especially her mistress, with whom she was arrested. Instead, however, of her being unable to imitate the rest, they were unable to imitate her. So that the excitement of her tormentors was surpassed by the amazement of her fellow-sufferers. Tortured from morning to night, so long and so fiercely that the attendants at the rack were obliged to relieve one another at intervals, Blandina never faltered. Her "refreshment and rest," as her surviving brethren wrote, "were to repeat 'I am a Christian; and no wrong is done by us.'"

The Deacon Sanctus, as he lay stretched upon the rack, returned the same answer to every interrogatory: "I am a Christian." "This," say the narrators, "he gave for his name, his country, his race and all besides. . . . . And thus," they add, "did he make it evident that nothing is fearful where the love of the Father is, nothing painful where the glory of Christ exists." The greater the suffering, the greater was the constancy of the prisoners. A woman who had abjured her faith, "came to her senses," as the letter of the survivors states. "Waking, so to speak, from a deep slumber, ... she straightway proclaimed herself a Christian." Others perished without once wavering in the frightful tortures of the dungeon. Amongst them was Pothinus, the aged Bishop of the community at Lyons.

Meanwhile, a day had been appointed for delivering the Christians to the wild beasts of the amphitheatre. The Deacon Sanctus and a young

convert named Maturus were first despatched; yet not without the aid of torments as well as of furious animals. Blandina was fastened to the stake, but as the beasts did not attack her, she was taken back to prison. Next Attalus, of Phrygian birth, but of great distinction at Lyons, was led around the arena amidst the execrations of the spectators. He, too, was remanded to the dungeon on its being made known to the governor that he was a Roman citizen.

Letters were then sent to the Emperor, demanding his pleasure concerning such as Attalus. Despatches soon returned ordering any citizens that might appear amongst the converts to be beheaded; all others being sentenced to the wild beasts. The delay had given the persecutors time to recover their interest in the bloody spectacles which had begun to pall. All of their victims who declared themselves citizens were now brought out to be beheaded; while the rest were reserved for the festival just then commencing at Lyons. Attalus, perhaps because he renounced his privileges of citizenship, was one of those tormented and destroyed in the arena. Day after day, Blandina was led forth with Ponticus, a boy of fifteen years, to behold the dying throes of their companions. At the close of the horrid festival, the two themselves were brought out to perish. Violence and torture were again employed to make the boy and the woman bend their will to that of their countrymen, their governor and their Emperor. Ponticus, encouraged by Blandina, unflinchingly kept his faith. Blandina, against whom,

apparently as a slave, the fury of the authorities and the spectators was most inflamed, continued to resist them with the greatest fortitude. Scourging, exposure to the beasts, burning, were tried in vain; when cast in a net before a bull, she was tossed upon his horns, until sense failed and death arrived at last. She died, said they who were describing her martyrdom, "like a noble mother who had inspired her children with courage and sent them before her as conquerors to the King." The very Heathen confessed that no woman amongst them had ever shown such endurance as the slave Blandina.

The assailants were by no means satisfied with the death of the last sufferer. It still remained to prevent the survivors of the assaults from gathering up the mangled relics of the slain. Some of the corpses were thrown to dogs for food; others were made the sport of men; and when both men and beasts were weary of their work, a fire was made of the bodies that were left, the ashes being cast into the Rhone. Some, no doubt, took part in these brutalities from mere excitement; others, however, were mad to prove the falsehood of the assurances which their victims had been uttering concerning resurrection and immortality. Only a few looked on with some compassion for the sufferings which they considered it would have been both right and simple to avoid. But the most compassionate and the most infuriated were of one voice in asking where could be the Deity in whom the Christians had trusted against the ordinances of the Emperor. The

Christians who survived had no such doubts within their minds, and no such taunts upon their lips. They wrote of the dead as of those "who had prayed for life," and "to whom life had been granted by God." [65]

From Lyons the persecution spread to Autun. There dwelt Symphorian, the scion of a noble house, and still in the bloom of his years. His refusal to take part in the public sacrifices to the goddess Cybele occasioned his arrest and condemnation as a Christian. On his way to execution, he was greeted by his mother, who had taken her stand upon the wall in order to bid him farewell. "My son," she cried, "my son Symphorian, cleave to the living God! Resume your courage, my child! We cannot fear death, for it surely leads to life. Lift up your heart, my son! Behold Him who reigneth in the heavens! Your life is not taken away to-day, you go to life above!" [66]

Our idea of the imperial assaults will be very imperfect if it rests upon these few records alone. The rumor that a convert had fallen in one place, or that a community had been assailed in another, was doubtless sufficient to excite the Heathen against the Christians in every part of the Empire. Thousands fell of whom the names are unknown even to the most comprehensive martyrologies. [67] It is of

[65] All from the account preserved ap. Eus., v. 1, 2.

[66] Acta S. Symph., 7. Ap. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. I. pp. 174 *et seq.*

[67] "Innumeros cineres sanctorum . . . .
Vidimus . . . . .
Incisos tumulis titulos et singula quæris
Nomina? Difficile est, ut replicare queam."
PRUDENT., *Hymn.* XI. *Peristeph.*

comparative unimportance that they have disappeared from human history. They are forever preserved in the Divine. [68]

[68] "Inscriptos cœlestis vitæ liber tantum continet." Acta SS. Epipod. et Alex., ap. Ruinart, 2.

CHAPTER III.

CHRISTIAN DEFENCES.

"By this means Christendom flaming in all parts of greatest importance at once."
HOOKER, *Ecclesiastical Polity*, Book IV. ch. XIV. 6.

SUBMISSIVE as were the victims of the imperial assaults, they did not yield without attempting to defend themselves. We are to read of these defences. They will prove that there was liberty in life as well as in death for the Christians.

But it was not by arms or by barricades, not by violent or by physical means that they defended themselves. Theirs was a liberty not to hate, to revenge, or even to repel, but to endure, to forbear and to love. The powers whereof the exercise entitled them to this liberty were not those of the brawler or the warrior. The law investing them with it was not to be sustained by contention or by force. Obedience to the law required all affection, all peacefulness on the part of its votaries. The powers which it called into exercise were all goodness, all generosity, all devotion. To exert these was to uphold the right to liberty. To follow

after peace and affection was to maintain the law on which liberty depended.

The Christians, at least many of them, were equal to the emergency. It might be before danger drew nigh. Then the patient discharge of duty to the Heathen as to the Christian was the true defence of Christian liberty. To the slanders of which they were the objects, the believers replied by actions as visible to their opponents as to their friends.[1] To the injuries with which they were afflicted, they opposed unbroken gentleness, unbroken justice on their own part. It might be in time of actual danger. Then the unhesitating firmness with which the Christians awaited their fate was their glorious defence. We have an instance of what could be done before the excitement of the torture or the arena contributed to nerve the sufferers. One who had been guilty, as is stated, of divers apostacies and impostures, not to say crimes, was arrested on the charge of having gone over to the Christian religion. No sooner did this occur than the Christians of the neighborhood hastened to procure his release or to mitigate his sufferings. "Early in the morning," writes the indignant Heathen, "there would come to the prison old women, and widows, and orphan children; while the principal men would remain all night, eating a meal,[2] and conversing on religious topics in the dungeon. Nay, there were others who came from afar to assist and console the prisoner; for it is beyond all belief what exer-

[1] Just. Mart., Apol., I. 24, II. 14. Athenagoras, Leg. ad Gent., 3.

[2] It is hardly necessary to say that this was the Communion.

tions these men will make when anything of the sort befals any one of them." [3]

Nor were acts like these the only defences of the Christians. It was time for them to uphold their principles by word as well as by deed, by pleading as well as by dying for their liberty. To explain what was but seditiousness in the eyes of others, to make it known that they were guiltless of the crimes and undeserving of the outrages which they had to bear, became the great object with many of the Christians. They could have no surer defences than those thus reared around them.[4]

"We do not differ," says one of these advocates, "from the rest of men, either in situation, in language, or in common habits. We do not occupy states of our own, nor do we use a distinct dialect, nor have we any peculiar way of living. Dwelling, some in one country and some in another, according to the chances of birth or of adventure, we observe the customs of these countries in respect to food, and clothing, and the ordinary usages of life." But the points of difference between his brethren and the Heathen are not concealed. "We inhabit our various countries," he says, "but not as common citizens. The state in which we seek a part is Heaven. We obey the laws appointed on earth. But our souls are superior to the laws which we obey. We

[3] Lucian., De Morte Peregrini, 11, 12.

[4] Tzchirner's definition of the Apology shows the comprehensiveness of the Christian pleas. "Den Inbegriff alles dessen was gesagt wird, den göttlichen Ursprung und die Wahrheit der Lehren der Christlichen Religion zu beweisen, die gegen sie und ihre Bekenner erhobenen Einwendungen und Beschuldigungen zu beantworten, und ihre Gegner zu bestreiten." Gesch. der Apol., p. 4.

love all men, yet are by all men persecuted.[5] We are unknown, yet are condemned. We are put to death, yet by that very means are raised to life. . . . . The Jews wage war against us as aliens, and the Heathen become our persecutors. But they who hate us cannot tell the reason of their hatred."[6] To save themselves from these afflictions, the Christians thus pleaded before their fellow-subjects.

They then turned towards the sovereign. He it was, especially at the period when the sovereign had actually become supreme, he it was whose protection was most essential to the Christians. From him, in the plenitude of his magnificence, it seemed more hopeful to expect justice than from his abject, exasperated subjects. To the Emperor, therefore, the Christians made their appeals.

Aristides, an Athenian philosopher who had been converted, was the first to address an Apology, as it was styled, to Hadrian.[7] A second Apology was presented to the same Emperor by Quadratus, also belonging to Athens.[8] Some of the ancient writers are of opinion that Hadrian was induced to forbid any further assaults upon the Christians.[9] It is very probable that he ordered the Athenian community to be spared.

[5] "As men in rage strike those that wish them best." *Othello.*

[6] Ad Diognetum Epistola, 5.

[7] "Aristides philosophus, vir eloquentissimus, ... Apologeticum pro Christianis obtulit contextum philosophorum sententiis." Hier., Ep. 83, tom. IV. p 656. Eus., IV. 3. He wrote in 123 or 126.

[8] Eus., IV. 3. Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 19. He wrote in 126.

[9] Jerome, in the letter cited above, alludes to Quadratus only. Eusebius, in the Chronicle, (ad Ann. 127), refers to both Quadratus and Aristides.

Justin, afterwards called the Martyr, took the same course. It has been related how he died. He was born of Greek parents in a Roman colony of Samaria. But his days were spent elsewhere, and partly at Rome.[10] He has left an account of his early interest in philosophical pursuits, from which he was suddenly withdrawn by conversion to Christianity.[11] No one could have been a more earnest convert. Twice subsequently was his voice raised in defending his brethren before their sovereigns.[12]

"Ye do not," he says to Antoninus Pius, "ye do not punish others accused before you until they are convicted. But in relation to us, ye receive the name which we bear as though it were in itself a conviction. . . . . We are charged with being Christians. If any one thus charged denies that he is a Christian, ye dismiss him as free from crime. But if any one confesses himself a Christian, him ye punish on account of his confession. It would be fit, however, that ye should inquire into the lives both of him who confesses and of him who denies the accusation, so that each might be judged according to his deeds."[13] Then comes a direct appeal for justice. "We demand," exclaims the Apologist, "that the actions of all accused on this score should be subjected to inquiry, in order that the convicted may be punished as criminals and not as Christians, while the acquitted may be dismissed as Chris-

[10] Where he went twice, and long resided. Acta Mart., ap. Ruinart, 2. Eus., IV. 11.

[11] Dial. c. Tryph., 2–8. Apol., II. 12.

[12] Probably in 139 and 164.

[13] Apol., I. 4.

tians who have done no wrong."[14] The history of Rome contains no nobler instance of unshrinking courage.

Justin enters upon explanations as patient as his demands were bold. He sets forth the Christian doctrine concerning order and loyalty. "We worship God alone," he says, "but we willingly serve you in every other way, confessing you to be kings and rulers of men, and praying that you may be found to have a wise understanding with your royal power."[15] He dwells, however, with equal earnestness upon the readiness of the Christians to endure the oppressions with which they might still be visited.[16] "We may be murdered," he pronounces, "but we cannot be injured."[17]

A similar tone pervades the second Apology which was delivered to Marcus Aurelius. Every sentence in both the appeals is a cry for justice, every argument a sob of indignant suffering or an assurance of dauntless resistance unto the end. A multitude seems gathered round. Men, women and children, the young Christian and the old, the high and the low, wait, while their champion pleads, to learn whether he succeeds or fails.

Justin brings out the chief of all the defences upon which the Christians relied. This was conver-

[14] Apol., I. 7. "Die frühern Apologien," says Tzschirner (Gesch. der Apologetik, p. 7), "beschäftigen sich weit mehr mit der Vertheidigung der Christen als mit der Ehrenrettung des Christenthums."

[15] Apol., I. 17. See ib., 11, 12.

[16] Ib., I. 8, 40, 57.

[17] Ὑμεῖς δὲ ἀποκτεῖναι μὲν δύνασθε, βλάψαι δὲ οὔ. Apol., I. 2. "No teme la muerte," as Luis de Granada says, (Guia de Pecadores, lib. I. cap. 24, § 1.) "porque al justo la muerte no es muerte."

sion. "Whoever," he writes, "believes our teachings true and promises to conform to them, him we direct to fast and pray for forgiveness of his former sins. With him we unite in fasting and in prayer. When this is done, we lead him where there is water for baptism. He is then regenerated in the same manner in which we ourselves have been regenerated. . . . . When he has thus been bathed, we conduct him to those called the Brethren, wherever they may be assembled. With them we join in common supplication for ourselves, for him who has been enlightened, and for all such in all places, praying that as we have been permitted to learn the truth, so we may be found worthy of being workers of good as well as of being faithful to the commandments which we have received. Our prayers ended, we greet one another with the holy kiss. The bread is brought, with a cup of water and wine, to him who presides over the brethren. He takes them, giving praise and glory to the Father of all, in the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, continuing more at length with the Eucharist or thanksgiving for these gifts from God. At the conclusion, the people say, Amen. Then the bread and wine are distributed by our Deacons, and are carried to the absent likewise." [18]

Another advocate follows Justin. Athenagoras, a native of Athens, but a resident at Alexandria, where he held an eminent position amongst the Christians, remonstrates in their behalf with the Emperor Aure-

[18] Apol., I. 61, 65.

lius. "The world is at peace," he begins, "under your protection. Yet we who are called Christians, live without any defence from you, harassed, tormented, and persecuted on account of our name, though we do nothing against your laws, but on the contrary, deport ourselves with reverence and justice both towards the Powers in Heaven and towards your dominion upon the earth. We beseech, therefore, that you would show some consideration for us, and put an end to the persecution whereof we are the objects. For it is not merely our property or our reputation at which our enemies aim, but our persons and our lives."[19] "The reckless slanders of certain men," declares the Christian, "can throw no shadow upon our innocence of life."[20] Nor do the sufferings for the relief of which he pleads overcast the solemn confidence in which the true believer could not but repose. "We know that God is witness to our thoughts as well as to our words, by night as well as by day. We are persuaded, likewise, that there is another life wherein we shall be rewarded for the trials which we have endured in this, or, perchance, condemned to miseries which we have escaped in this. It is not natural, therefore, that we should prefer to do evil or to expose ourselves to condemnation by the Sovereign Judge."[21]

The position of the Christians before their rulers

[19] Athenag., Leg., 1. The address was made, strictly speaking, to Aurelius and Commodus. Its date is probably 177.

[20] Id., ib., 3.

[21] Ἐπὶ τοιούτοις οὐκ εἰκὸς ἡμᾶς ἐθελοκακεῖν οὐδ' αὐτοὺς τῷ Μεγάλῳ παραδιδόναι κολασθησομένους Δικαστῇ. Athen., Leg., 31. The preceding sentences are more freely translated.

was defensive. So it was generally before their fellow-subjects. But towards the latter they often took what may be called an offensive attitude. A certain Diognetus, it seems, had advanced so far as to be struck with the progress and the influence of the new faith. Yet still he lingered amidst the prejudices of those attached to the ancient religion. At this juncture he is addressed by some Christian. The letter opens with an appeal to Diognetus so to rid himself of all preoccupations as to be able to receive the statements which the writer intends to lay before him. The decline of the ancient creeds is then portrayed. An account follows in relation to the Creator and the Saviour by whom the Christian revelation had been made. Thence the writer returns to review the earlier state of mankind, and to explain the causes that had delayed their redemption. All this is urged in language animated with the most ardent expressions of gratitude and of hope. "When thou shalt know God," proceeds the Christian, "with how great joy wilt thou also be filled! And how wilt thou love Him who hath so much loved thee! Thou wilt imitate His bounty. It is not authority, it is not wealth, it is not oppression of the lowly, that constitutes happiness. Nor can any one in these respects pretend to imitate the Deity; for in none of these doth His majesty consist. But he who takes upon himself another's burden, he who seeks to use his abundance for the benefit of those in want, he is a god to those whom he assists, he is an imitator of the Deity."[22]

[22] Ep. ad Diog., 10.

Others took the same tone. Tatian, "of the land," as he says, "of the Assyrians," had learned whatever could be learned in the Heathen schools. With all the ardor of an eastern temperament, he declared against the visions that interposed between the Heathen and the realities of the Christians.[23] Hermias sent forth a work, entitled a Mockery of the Heathen Philosophers, to prove the saying of St. Paul, that "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."[24] More serious than Hermias, more moderate than Tatian, Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, wrote with more formidable effect. To the person whom he addresses he relates his own conversion. Then pointing out the deficiencies of the Heathen doctrine, he asserts the truth contained in the Christian Scriptures.[25] It is impossible, he asserts, to attain to a conception of the Divinity without His aid.[26] It implied the weakness of the Heathen compared with the Christians, strong as these were in the assistance of the Deity.

This was not merely defending the Christian liberty. It was braving the Heathen oppression. "I am called," wrote the impetuous Tatian, "to pay tribute; and I am ready to pay it. I am called to serve and to obey; and I acknowledge my servitude. But then a man must be honored as a man, and as nothing more."[27] The Heathen oppressor had never been more decisively defied.

[23] Orat. Cont. Græcos, 3, 4, 25, 26.

[24] See his treatise, *Διασυρμὸς τῶν ἔξω φιλοσόφων*, 10.

[25] Ad Autolycum, II. 4 *et seq.*, 11 *et seq.*, III. 1, 9, 16, 20, 23.

[26] See the whole passage, Ib., I. 3.

[27] *Τὸν μὲν γὰρ ἄνθρωπον ἀνθρωπίνως τιμητέον.* Tatian., Cont. Græc. Orat., 4. Theophilus (Ad Autol., I. 11,) and Athenagoras (Leg., 37,) make the same reservation.

All the while, however, the Christian subject was defended. Not that there were no losses on the side of the Christians. There were many of which mention has been made. There were many of which mention is yet to be made. But the liberty of the Christians was nobly defended. "This was the time," says the historian, "when the knowledge of salvation blazed out before all men."[28] Never was liberty more clearly the right of the Christians, never was it more evidently their possession, than when their exertions were redoubled, when their powers were multiplied in upholding the law of God against the law of man.

[28] Eus., Præp. Ev., IV. 17. He is speaking of Hadrian's reign.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Τοὺς δὲ ἰδίους ἀναπαύσει. "And He will give rest to His own."
JUSTIN MARTYR, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 121.

ADDITIONAL defences were already required. More dangerous than the foe without, were the foes that appeared within, amongst the Christians themselves.[1]

The Christians were divided by race. In some veins flowed Eastern blood, in others Western. The converts of the North were of one mould; those of the South were of another. So various in origin, they were from the first exposed to dissension.[2]

The separation in race was not the only one. Originally drawn from the lowest classes, the Christians were subsequently joined by converts from the

[1] "Lo! Discord at the altar dares to stand,
Uplifted toward high Heaven her fiery brand,
A cherished Priestess of the new-baptized!"
WORDSWORTH.

[2] "When Christianity became a bulky system, one may trace in it the genius of the loquacious and ever-wrangling Greeks; of the enthusiastic Africans, whose imagination was sublimed by the heat of the sun; of the superstitious Ægyptians, whose fertile soil and warm climate produced monks and hermits, swarming like animals sprung from the impregnated mud of the Nile; and of the ambitions and political Romans, who were resolved to rule over the world in one shape or other." Jortin, Pref. to Rem. on Eccl. Hist.

highest classes. In no realms were the distinctions of rank so wide as in the Roman. They were felt amongst the Christians. The jeer of the Heathen at the meanness of the Christians in a temporal point of view[3] is indignantly repelled. There were lords amongst them, the Christians would insist, as well as slaves, philosophers as well as artisans. To convert all ranks was their duty. But to lay stress upon the different ranks after conversion was to provoke repeated altercations.

The divisions on account of principles were still more threatening. To those who embraced their religion "with all the heart," it was quite another faith from what it was to those content to embrace it "with all the mind." The intellectual and the spiritual Christians formed two opposite orders of believers. Nor did less variance arise from the different degrees of liberality or of illiberality characterizing different communities and different individuals. Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, wrote to Pinytus, Bishop of Gnossus in Crete, warning his brother against enjoining too rigid precepts or too oppressive duties. "We want," replied the Cretan, "more solid nourishment. You must feed us with stronger doctrine when you write again, or we shall sink under this childish treatment which you adopt in giving milky instruction to full-grown men."[4] No principle, it may be said, but had its adherents as

[3] Celsus, ap. Orig., Cont. Cels., III. 44. This was from the Λόγος ἀληθής, the True Book, as its author called it. See Lardner's Ancient Heathen Testimonies, ch. XVIII. sect. x.

[4] Ap. Eus., IV. 23. Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 27, 28.

earnest as the Cretan. Nor were the advocates of any principle so harmonious as not to be frequently at discord amongst themselves.

So angry were the controversies that ensued as to disturb the very Heathen. The opponent of the Christians taunts them with their strifes.[5] Nor could they find an immediate reply. Whether it were a local disagreement or a general contention that severed them, they were everywhere arrayed, one against the other, in hazardous hostility.

One of the chief disputes during the period sprang from contrary opinions with regard to the celebration of a festival. The Christians of the East selected one day for eating the Paschal lamb in remembrance of the death of Christ. Another day was chosen by the Christians of the West. Divided upon this point, they were also at variance upon the season at which the Resurrection should be commemorated. "Nor is this," says Irenæus, the great polemic of the West, "a dispute only about the proper time, but about the proper manner in which the anniversary ought to be observed."[6] To such a degree were the passions of both sides inflamed, that Polycarp, the Bishop of Smyrna, made a journey to Rome in the hope of deciding the question at issue. His conference, however, with the Bishop of Rome proved ineffectual.[7]

[5] Celsus, ap. Orig., Cont. Cels., III. 10 *et seq.*

[6] Iren., ap. Eus., v. 24. See Mosheim, Comment. Sæc. Sec., § LXXI.

[7] Iren., ap. Eus., v. 24. The controversy continued with so much acrimony, that it was marked as one of the principal points to be settled at Nice, nearly two centuries afterwards. Eus., Vit. Const., II. 5.

Hegesippus, the earliest historian of the Christians, travelled east and west in search of their traditions. "Everywhere," he would fain assert, "have I found the same doctrine according to the Law, the Prophets, and the Lord." But he is obliged to contradict himself. One Christian, he confesses, had created a disturbance, "on account of his not having been made a Bishop." Others had introduced various principles, "each for himself and apart from the rest." "Hence," continues Hegesippus, "come false Christs, false Prophets and false Apostles, rupturing the unity of the church by deceitful doctrines against God and against His Christ."[8]

Liberty had been bestowed upon the Christians as the means of preparing union amongst men. Were this abandoned, there was no other system to which they could revert but the centralization of the world around them. The rupture of union, arising from the perversion, involved the loss of liberty. This could not but be perceived. It could not but inspire efforts to restore the harmony which had been disturbed.

One of these efforts appears in a work entitled the Clementine Homilies. Its name is taken from that of its hero Clement, whom it follows through his wanderings in search of a truer faith than that prevailing in his own community at Rome. Obtaining the guidance of the Apostle Peter, the pilgrim traverses the domains in which the different bands of believers had encamped, each under its different

[8] Ap. Eus., IV. 22.

banner. After various encounters, Clement is convinced of the identity of Christianity with the truth delivered to patriarchs and to prophets in the olden times. Christ, avers the wanderer, is "He who hath proclaimed the things long ago secretly entrusted to those worthy of them, but now compassionately communicated to the Heathen."[9] Such a declaration[10] sounds like an attempt to unite opposing parties on ground which they all could occupy. The past and the present were declared to be harmonized. Was not this to preserve the present from its discords?

The exertions of Tatian, the antagonist of the Heathen philosophers, may have been directed towards the same end. Returning from Rome, where his religious impressions had been confirmed not only by intercourse with the Western Christians, but by the sight of their fortitude in persecution, Tatian seems to have determined upon arresting the tendencies to separation amongst the Eastern converts. How he carried out his purpose seems to be indicated by the title then or afterwards attached to his followers, as Encratites or Self-Controllers.[11] To restrain their irregularities, he may have argued, was the first step to be taken by the Christians who would be united.

Much the same course was pursued by Montanus, a native or a resident of Phrygia.[12] Attributing his

[9] Clem. Hom., III. 19.

[10] It is not to be mistaken for a reaction towards Judaism. Belief in Moses, as he was represented by the Jews, is expressly stated to forbid belief in Christ. Ib., VIII. 6. So II. 38 *et seq.*, III. 42 *et seq.*

[11] *Ἐγκρατῖται*. Cf. Theodoret., Hær. Fab., I. 20.

[12] More exactly, of Mysia, then included in Phrygia. Eus., V. 16.

doctrines to the Spirit swaying his heart "as the plectrum sways the lyre,"[13] Montanus gathered a large number of adherents believing in his inspiration. The name of Jerusalem was given to two of the Phrygian villages in which his followers were collected, "in order," says his disdainful adversary, "to attract men thither from all quarters." A faint light upon the edge of the traditions relating to Montanus reveals his features as those of a reformer. He urged a greater strictness on the part of the Christians at large, as well as a greater humility on the part of their leaders.[14] No measures more essential to secure their union could have been suggested.

But it was not for individuals to reunite the sundered Christians. Not all the inspiration of Montanus, not all the fervor of Tatian, could sustain their rigid principles in presence of the wanton assertions opposing them. Not all the caution apparent in the Clementine Homilies could counteract the recklessness that craved whatever was most new and strange. The Homilies were set aside as themselves tainted. Tatian was accused of stupidity and presumption.[15] Montanus was charged with imposture and blasphemy.[16] The efforts made towards restoring harmony

[13] Ἰδού ἄνθρωπος ὡσεὶ λύρα κἀγὼ ὑπταμαι ὡσεὶ πλῆκτρον. Ap. Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. I., XLVIII. 4.

[14] Jerome (ad Marcell., cited by Bingham, Christ. Antiq., book II. ch XVII. sect. v.) implies some action of Montanus against the episcopacy of his time.

[15] Iren., Adv. Hær., I. 28. 1. See the later Epiphanius, Adv. Hær., lib. I. tom. III., XLVI. 1.

[16] Eusebius (IV. 27, v. 16-19) enumerates the opponents of Montanus. "Le démon" is the appellation conferred on him by Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. II. p. 420.

had not only failed. They had but increased the existing discord.

The Christians of the period were standing as on the shore of an ocean, unbounded and yet so overhung with clouds as to resemble a misty lake amongst the mountains of the interior. There were few who had any idea of the course to be pursued over the unknown waters. But a desire to cross them in one way or another possessed the most ignorant as well as the most intelligent, the most peaceful as well as the most turbulent of those who reached the strand. Some dashed in amongst the breakers. Others, leaping into crazy skiffs, turned their prows towards the farthest horizon which they could discern. Collision, wreck and ruin were inevitable.

Amidst the general confusion, the Heretics appeared. It was not for the first time. But they presented themselves in such numbers as to produce as startling an effect as if they had never before come forward. Their name, originally denoting Choosers, signified the assertion, or, as they would term it, the possession of the ability to choose amongst the principles of their new religion.[17] Some they altogether set aside. Others which they took up, they developed in forms unknown to those embracing the Christian doctrines in their unity.

Foremost amongst the Heretics were the Gnostics, to whom, as reverting to the ancient systems, allusion has been made. They derived their name, how-

[17] "Hæreses dictæ Græca voce ex interpretatione electionis, qua quis sive ad instituendas sive ad suscipiendas eas utitur." Tertull., De Præscr. Hær., 6. So Adv. Marc., II. 2.

ever, not from their reversion to what had been, but from their aspiration after what had not been, with the aid of the Gnosis, that is, the wisdom or divination possessed by themselves alone. As far, in their own opinion, above the Christians at large, as these were above the Heathen, the Gnostics ventured upon what may be called their revelations. Believers in the Divine mission of Jesus Christ, they gave it an entirely new representation. Above the Jehovah of the Jewish Scriptures, styled by the Gnostics the Demiurgus, that is, the Creator, was a higher Deity in whom they believed as the Supreme God, dwelling in the Pleroma, or the Fulness of the spiritual universe.[18] From thence he had seldom issued. The creation of the Demiurgus and the direction of that Deity by successive missions of Æons, or Immortals,[19] constituted the sum of human obligations towards the God of the Pleroma. To acquaint mankind with him and to emancipate them from the government of the Demiurgus, whose existence had been one long contention with the evil in the world,[20] was the work of Christ. In his formation, the Æons were supposed to have united.[21]

Such were the visions of the Gnostics. They returned from a Heaven filled by different beings, to an earth governed by different laws from those known to the Christians. Marcion of Pontus, for instance, the excommunicated son of a Christian

[18] *Πλήρωμα*. The Supreme originally dwelt alone with Thought. Iren., Adv. Hær., I. 2. 1.

[19] *Αἰῶνες*. Id., ib., I. 1.

[20] The "evil" was in the *ὕλη*, the matter of the universe. Tert., Adv. Marc., I. 2.

[21] Iren., Adv. Hær., I. 2. 6.

Bishop,[22] went to the extreme of asceticism in inculcating the obligations of his disciples. To be saved from their Creator, the Demiurgus, they must abstain from the use of aught around them,[23] while to deprive him of his creatures, they must renounce marrying and giving in marriage.[24] Such a teacher might well address his disciples as his fellow-sufferers and his fellow-wretches.[25] On the other hand, Valentinus of Egypt was the preacher of unbounded indulgence. According to him, mankind were divided into three great classes; the first containing the Heathen worshippers of the Creation, the second the Jewish worshippers of the Creator, and the third the Christian worshippers of the Supreme Divinity. The Christians were likewise subdivided into three orders, one of ordinary Christians, another of ordinary Gnostics, and a third of superior Gnostics, amongst whom Valentinus included himself and his followers.[26] The lower ranks alone were bound to rules or to labors.[27] The higher, it was urged, had no need of either, inasmuch as they were capable of attaining without exertion or restraint to perfect wisdom.[28] The license

[22] Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. I. tom. III., XLII. 1.

[23] *Δι' ἀντίταξιν τὴν πρὸς τὸν Δημιουργὸν τὴν χρῆσιν τῶν κοσμικῶν παραιτουμένου.* Clem. Alex., Strom., III. 4. tom. I. p. 522. See Orig., Cont. Cels., II. 3, VI. 53.

[24] Clem. Alex., Strom., III. 3 *et seq.* Tert., Adv. Marc., I. 29. See the Omn. Hær. Refut., lib. VII. 29 *et seq.*, pp. 246 *et seq.*

[25] *Συνταλαιπώροι* (id est, commiserones) . . . . *συμμισουμένοι*, (id est, coödibiles). Tert., Adv. Marc., IV. 9. Many of the Marcionites were martyrs. Eus., V. 16.

[26] Heracleon, cited by Ritter, Hist. of Christ. Philosophy, book II. ch. III. sect. 1, note. Also Irenæus, Adv. Hær., I. 7. 5.

[27] Iren., Adv. Hær., I. 6. 1.

[28] Iren., Adv. Hær., I. 6. 1 *et seq.* Clement of Alexandria (Strom., II. 20) cites a passage from Valentinus not altogether consistent with the statements in Irenæus. So

and the indolence which ensued may be imagined. Valentinus might be content with the reveries that gave him and his party the title of Theosophic, the Wise in God.[29] But there must have been many to join him with no other purpose than that of giving rein to the passions which he allowed to be uncontrolled.

"Manifold are the heresies," exclaims Irenæus, "derived from these. Many, nay, all of these men desire to be teachers, and to change the very heresy in which they have been involved. Opinion leads to opinion and dogma to dogma with them."[30] Many, however, as were the teachers, their disciples must have been few. It was the boast of the Gnostics, that not more than "one of a thousand or two of ten thousand" could become acquainted with their doctrines.[31] The more abstruse, the more imaginative the doctrines, the less numerous were those embracing them. Christ, they declared, had never taught openly.[32] It was their part, they concluded, to enwrap their mysteries in secrecy.[33] Claiming for themselves superiority "over St. Peter, St. Paul or any other Apostle,"[34] they urged that it was better to leave the worthy amongst their

Heracleon, who was a decided Valentinian, maintains the necessity of works. Ap. Clem. Alex., Strom., IV. 9.

[29] Epiph., Adv. Hær., lib. I. tom. II., XXXI. 1, 7. On Valentinus's doctrines, generally, see the Omn. Hær. Refut., lib. VI. 21 *et seq.* pp. 177 *et seq.*

[30] Adv. Hær., I. 28. 1.

[31] "Non autem multos scire posse hæc, sed unum a mille et duo a myriadibus." Irenæus, concerning the Gnostic Basilides, Adv. Hær., I. 24. 6.

[32] Iren., Adv. Hær., I. 3. 1, 25. 5. II. 28. 2. IV. 33. 9. Clem. Alex., Strom., IV. 9.

[33] Iren., Adv. Haer., I. 24. 6. So Clement of Alexandria, Strom., VII. 16.

[34] Iren., Adv. Haer., I. 13. 6. So II. 28. 4 *et seq.*, III. 1. 1.

followers in ignorance rather than raise the unworthy to wisdom.[35] The principles that had elevated the few above the many in antiquity had obtained no more decisive utterance than thus proceeded from the Gnostic Christians.

There were Heretics to whom the name of Christians cannot be applied. Some reviled their Saviour.[36] Others pointed to him as to a mere man of wisdom.[37] Here were men declaring themselves "Sons of the First God," with no other intent than that of obtaining license for their iniquities.[38] There, again, were men proclaiming licentiousness to be the means by which entrance was effected into the kingdom of Heaven.[39] These are not to be treated as doctrines. They were but blasphemies.[40]

Such men boasted of their independence. It was the same with the Heretics in general. But did they exercise the powers from which the right to liberty proceeds? Did they acknowledge the law which would have made liberty their possession? Not so. They framed laws of their own, under which none but imperfect powers could be put in exercise. Poor as these powers were, they were denied to all but the few. From all but the few the laws sustaining these powers were withheld.

[35] *Διὰ τουτο γὰρ καὶ ζητεῖ, πότερον χεῖρον ἀναξίῳ δοῦναι ἢ ἀξίῳ μὴ παραδοῦναι.* Ex. Script. Prophet. Eclogæ, xxvii., ap. Clem. Alex., tom. ii. pp. 996, 997.

[36] Like the Ophians. Orig., Cont. Cels., vi. 28. See Norton on the Genuineness of the Gospels, vol. ii. pp. 218 *et seq.*

[37] Like the Carpocratians. Iren., Adv. Hær., i. 25. 1 *et seq.* See Norton, again, pp. 218 *et seq.*

[38] Clem. Alex., Strom., iii. 4.

[39] Id., ib.

[40] *Ἐξ ὕλων ἀποφοιτήσασα τοῦ Ἰησοῦ συνέστη γνώμη.* Orig., Cont. Cels., iii. 13.

The many were to have no claim, no hold upon liberty. What else was this besides centralization?

All the more pressing was the need of union amongst the Christians. Such as would not see the subversion of the Divine law, such as would not suffer the annihilation of the powers which the law had called forth or of the liberty which it had proclaimed, needed to unite with one another as their Apostles and their Saviour had enjoined. The community from which Polycarp was removed by martyrdom appealed for sympathy "to the Communities of the Holy Catholic Church in every place."[41] It was to the same church that the Christians of the time found that they must look for the preservation of union amongst themselves.

The Church Catholic was the Church Universal. However wide the divisions created by race, or rank, or doctrine, they were repaired so soon as those involved in them became the members of a body, knowing no diversity of faith, of station or of origin. None were so distant, none were so low, none were so ignorant as not to be received. Nor were any so wise, so high or so near to be more than received. That is, there were none who could pretend to greater privileges than their brethren. The many were not bound to the few, but united with them.

Those whom the Church united, it also freed. Union implied freedom. It required freedom amongst

[41] *Ταῖς κατὰ πάντα τόπον τῆς ἁγίας καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας παροικίαις.* Eus., IV. 15.

its members. The low needed to be free from the high. The high equally needed to be free from the low. Not that there were to be no servants or rulers, no teachers or disciples. But that all required to be so freed from a forced dependence as to enter into that willing dependence upon one another which was the clearest proof of liberty as of union. The Church proclaimed the Divine law. None could obey this without being freed. None could obey it without being united.

The members of the Catholic Church were not without their passions. Irenæus taunts the followers of Valentinus at one moment with avarice, at another with infidelity.[42] Justin Martyr writes of Marcion as of one excited by demons to disturb the faithful with impious hallucinations.[43] Polycarp, the especial advocate of union amongst the Catholics, knows no bonds between them and the Heretics. "Dost thou know me?" asked Marcion on meeting the Bishop of Smyrna. "I know thee to be the first-born of Satan," replied Polycarp. "And I can bear witness," adds Irenæus in relating the story, "that if that blessed and apostolic prelate had heard the things now heard, he would have stopped his ears, and cried out with his wonted words, 'Good God, unto what times hast Thou kept me alive, that I should have these things to bear?'"[44] Such vehemence, such violence endangered the cause of the Catholic Christians far more than that of their adversaries.

[42] Adv. Hær., I. 4. 3, II. 32. 2. See Polycarp's own epistle, Ad Philipp., 7.
[43] Apol., I. 58.
[44] Iren. Adv. Hær., III. 3. 4.

Nor were the Catholics without what might have been called heresies of their own. The disputes previously mentioned as having been excited amongst them could not have arisen had all held to the same doctrines. Some were laying chief stress upon the Jewish Scriptures.[45] Some were inclining to the Heathen whose opinions coincided with their own.[46] Others, on the opposite side, were bringing forward forgeries to sustain their peculiar views.[47] Visions of miracles[48] and milleniums[49] were rising up before many minds. As the doctrines of the Catholics varied, so did their institutions. The believers, instead of being blended in one body, were separated into two classes, one of superiors denominated the Faithful, the other of inferiors, entitled the Unbaptized or the Catechumens.[50] Above them the priesthood attained to increased powers. To this point we must presently recur. Suffice it here to remark that there were movements amongst the Catholics as threatening as those amongst the Heretics.

Amidst these errors, amidst these passions, the Catholics could but cling to their Church. Of the champions whom this obtained, Irenæus may be

[45] Just. Mart., Dial. c. Tryph., 7, 8. Athenag., Leg. pro Christ., 9. Theoph., Ad. Autol., II. 34. Iren., Adv. Hær., IV. 9 *et seq.* No less than two new versions of the Jewish Scriptures appeared during the period, one by Aquila and another by Theodotian. Burton, Lect. Eccl. Hist., pp. 351, 436.

[46] Just. Mart., Apol., I. 46, II. 13. Dial. c. Tryph., 45. On the symbols and ideas borrowed from Heathenism, see a Mémoire sur les Antiquités Chrét., Acad. des Inscr., tom. XIII. pp. 92 *et seq.*, Nouv. Série.

[47] See Gieseler's citations, Man. Eccl. Hist., § 52.

[48] Just. Mart., Apol., II. 6. Iren., Adv. Hær., II. 32. 4.

[49] Just. Mart., Dial. c. Tryph., 80 *et seq.*, 110 *et seq.* The world, it was said, had been so long preserved on account of the Christians alone. Id., ib., 39, Apol., II. 7. See Cave, Apostolici, Justin, XXII.

[50] Clem. Hom., III. 63.

taken as the chief. His name, translated as the Peaceful,[51] was deserved so far as he labored to preserve the union of the Catholic Christians, especially of those belonging to the West.[52] Born in Asia Minor, he emigrated to Lyons, where he was raised to the bishopric immediately after the persecution of the Christians in that city. Distant as was his diocese from the greater portion of the Christian communities, Irenæus entered directly into the questions agitated afar by his contemporaries.

His great work was levelled at the heresies, or more particularly at those of the Gnostics, just then the most notorious.[53] "Ye will not expect," he writes, "from one living among the Kelts, and generally using a barbarous tongue, the arts of language which I have not learned. . . . . Yet ye shall have," he promises, "a complete refutation of all the Heretics, ... in behalf of the only true and living faith which the church hath received from the Apostles, and hath distributed to her children."[54] "True wisdom," he continues, "is the doctrine of the Apostles, together with the ancient state of the church and the character of the body of Christ, according to the succession of the Bishops to whom the Apostles delivered their doctrine."[55] Such words deserved to be well weighed. Were they followed by the

[51] *Ὁ μὲν Εἰρηναῖος . . . . εἰρηνοποίος.* "Well named the Peaceful," says Eusebius, (v. 24) "in that he was a peace-maker."

[52] Eus., III. 24. "The Illuminator of Gaul," says Theodoret, Dial. I., tom. IV. p. 33, ed. Paris.

[53] Other works are mentioned by Eus., v. 20; Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 35.

[54] Adv. Hær., lib. I. Præf., 3. Lib. III. Præf.

[55] Ib., IV. 33. 8.

Roman Christians, were the doctrine of the Apostles and the succession of the Bishops maintained, there could be no relapse from union into the centralization upheld by merely human rulers, by merely human rules.

But the danger was not over. The union of the Christians was threatened from other quarters than those of the Heretics. The Catholics themselves, their very leaders, were pursuing a course at variance with the principles on which the Catholic Church had been founded. A strong hand, it was argued, was necessary to maintain the converts in their fidelity to the religion embraced by them. Nor did the assumption of greater power by the head of any community appear merely in his relations to his own people. It happened that the Bishop of one diocese arrogated influence, if not dominion, over another. This frequently occurred on the part of such as presided in a city surrounded by rural communities inferior in size or in importance. Still more decisive were the claims put forth from Rome. At the head of the converts gathered where their chief Apostles had died, and where their temporal rulers still resided, the Roman Bishop seemed not only to himself, but to many of his fellow-believers, to be entitled to supremacy amongst the Christians. "It is necessary," urged the author of the Clementine Homilies, "that we should submit to some single rule as the only means of continuing in harmony."[56]

Victor became Bishop of Rome towards the close of the second century. A native of Africa,[57] ardent

[56] Clem. Hom., III. 61.

[57] Anast., De Vit. Pont. Rom., 15.

in nature and excited by the controversies of which the imperial city had been the scene,[58] Victor resolved to put forth his authority in suppressing the disorders of the Christians. To do this the more effectually, he assumed a dominion such as no ruler amongst them had as yet obtained. He began by excommunicating Theodotus, an Eastern convert who denied the Saviour's divinity.[59] Many of the most reputable Roman Christians had been induced to take up with the doctrines of the stranger before he was condemned by their Bishop.

Stimulated, perhaps, by his success against Theodotus, Victor entered upon a wider field. The controversy concerning the Easter festival which Polycarp had vainly attempted to allay, some thirty-five years before, had since revived. The Bishop of Ephesus, Polycrates, was now the advocate of the Eastern views, while Victor made himself the champion of the Western opinions on the long disputed subject. After much angry correspondence, Victor demanded that Polycrates should summon a Council of his colleagues, expecting, apparently, to be supported as the Bishop of Rome against any influence of the Ephesian. But when the Bishops came together, it was to decide for Polycrates. "Sixty-five years," he wrote to Rome, "have I numbered in the Lord. I have conferred with the brethren throughout the world, and I have reviewed the entire Scriptures. I am not terrified, therefore, at

[58] Marcion and Valentinus had both been there.

[59] "The first," says a writer cited by Eusebius, v. 28, "to assert that Jesus Christ was a mere man," — ψιλὸν ἄνθρωπον.

the things with which you threaten me. For they who are greater than I have bid us obey God rather than men." [60] Inflamed by this resistance to his will, Victor excommunicated the communities to which, apparently, the members of the Council at Ephesus belonged. [61]

It soon appeared that he had pushed his authority too far. From all quarters he received recommendations to retract the sentence which he had pronounced. If there was any portion of the Christians by whom the powers of the Roman see would be upheld in ordinary circumstances, it was the church of Gaul. Teachers from Rome had gathered many of the Gallic communities, while the connection of almost all with the Roman community had been close and continual. [62] Especially did the present case appear to demand peculiar support from the Christians of Gaul. For the rule which Victor would have enforced in relation to the celebration of Easter coincided exactly with their desires. Yet it was from the community of Lyons, and through the prelate whose voice had been unwearied in sustaining ecclesiastical authority, that Victor encountered the sternest resistance. Against the centralization which he would have essayed, Irenæus once more appears as the advocate of union.

He wrote in the name of his people, "fitly warn-

[60] Ap. Eus., v. 24.

[61] The expression of Eusebius (as above,) is: *Τῆς Ἀσίας πάσης ἅμα ταῖς ὁμόροις ἐκκλησίαις τὰς παροικίας.* The question of the extent to which Victor meant his sentence to reach is very complicated. See Excursus VI. to Heinichen's edition of Eusebius, tom. III. p. 375.

[62] Iren., Adv. Hær., III. 3. 2, 4. 1. Eus., v. 3, 4.

ing Victor," says the historian, "not to cut off whole churches of God for preserving their own traditions." "This difference," remarked Irenæus, "is one that has arisen not in our time, but in the time of those before us. . . . . Yet not the less were they at peace, not the less have we been at peace with one another."[63] Not content with writing to Victor, Irenæus addressed letters of the same tenor to a large number of his colleagues. He had declared in his work against the Heretics that it was "better and more advantageous to remain mere private persons and men of little learning, and so to draw nigh to God in love, than to think we are full of knowledge and experience."[64] It was the same spirit that inspired him in combating the pretensions of Victor to supremacy. The Roman Bishop was resisted. The Catholic Church was defended.

The effect of the defences thus completed by the Christians was lessened by their dissensions. The Heathen could not be so strenuously resisted when there were also Heretics to resist. The Heretic could not be so decisively repelled when there were others besides him to repel. Nor are we to suppose that the Catholic Christians were secure at the last. Whether Catholics or not, the Christians were still the subjects of Rome. Theirs, consequently, were the recollections, the associations, and the expectations, temporally speaking, of Romans. The temporal relations in which the Christians remained could

[63] Ap. Eus., v. 24. All this was between the years 195 and 200.

[64] Adv. Hær., II. 26. 1.

not but affect the spiritual relations into which they entered.[65] Their defences, at some points, could not but be insecure.[66]

[65] "Haec ergo impuritas in Romanis et ante Christi Evangelium esse cœpit; et quod est gravius, nec post Evangelium cessavit." Salvianus, De Gub. Dei, lib. VII. p. 274, ed. Oxon.

[66] "Non sien le genti ancor troppo sicure
A giudicar, si come quei che stima
Le biade in campo pria che sien mature."
Paradiso.

CHAPTER V.

FRESH CONFLICTS.

"Within, beneath their purple, they have many a tragedy to behold."
LUCIAN, *De Merc. Cond.*, 41.

To Marcus Aurelius[1] succeeded his son Commodus, followed by other sovereigns, more dependent than any of their predecessors. Never had the imperial soldiery been so supreme. It triumphed over the Emperor, and not only over him, but over the courtiers, to whom the earlier sovereigns had submitted as well as to their armies.

A soldier, named Maternus, deserting from one of the legions, gathered a number of followers sufficient to make head against the imperial forces in the Western provinces. At length hard pressed, he divided his band into several parties, ordering them to find their way to Rome, where he proposed to raise himself to the throne by the murder of Commodus. He found the Romans absorbed in revels,

[1] Dying, in the midst of war on the frontier, in 180. Capit., Ant. Phil., 28. Commodus had been already declared his colleague and successor. Lamp., Comm., 1, 2.

while their sovereign pursued his own debaucheries amidst the armed lines by which he was supported as well as controlled. Before Maternus could effect his purpose, it was disclosed by some of his followers. Commodus, the Emperor, instantly fled to one of his villas, leaving to others the investigation and the suppression of the conspiracy. Maternus was put to death.[2]

While a common trooper could occasion such commotions, the highest as well as the lowest classes in civil life lay powerless. A Senator describes the scenes of which he had been an eye-witness. "These spectacles," says Dion Cassius,[3] referring to the gladiatorial displays of Commodus, "lasted for fourteen days. Whenever the Emperor was to appear in the games, we of the Senate would go with the Knights to look on and to shout as we were bid. 'Thou art our Lord!' we cried. 'Thou the Victor and the most Fortunate! Thou conquerest and thou wilt conquer for ever!' Many of the people," confesses the Senator, "did not enter the amphitheatre. Others who did, immediately withdrew, partly from shame at what was going on, and partly from fear that the Emperor intended, as was actually reported, to shoot some of them with arrows. . . . . That fear, indeed, possessed us all, and we Senators were also in expectation of being slain."[4] Yet nei-

[2] Hero., I. 10. De Quincey tells this in his effective but inaccurate style, Cæsars, pp. 22 *et seq.*

[3] Born in Bithynia, about thirty years before. He wrote a narrative of Commodus' reign, which formed a part of his larger history. Dion de se et sua Hist., in Reimar's edition, tom. II. pp. 1528 *et seq.*, 1535.

[4] Ap. Xiph., LXXII. 20, 21.

ther the acclamations of the Senate nor those of the multitude ceased until Commodus was murdered by some of his own household. He had reigned twelve years.[5]

Publius Helvius Pertinax, an aged Senator, was accepted for an Emperor by the Prætorians, on condition of their being well paid. Within three months, they murdered Pertinax,[6] and sold the imperial title a second time to Didius Salvus Julianus, another Senator of advanced years.[7] This, however, was resented by the legions, who had their claims to the disposal of the throne. No less than three armies proclaimed their own sovereigns. Clodius Albinus, commander in Britain, Pescennius Niger, Præfect in Syria, and Septimius Severus, Legate in Pannonia, were severally matched against the Emperor of the Prætorians. The Pannonian general, Severus, a native of Africa, soon distanced his competitors.

"He entered the city," says the Senator, "attended by all the army, both foot and horse, in complete array. Of all the spectacles which I ever saw," breaks forth Dion, "this was the most glorious. For the city was decked with flowers, laurels, hangings of various colors, lights, and burning incense. The people, clad in white, shouted again and again with joyous acclaim. The soldiers marched on with great

[5] Until 192. It is curious to compare his titles in life (see Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXII. 15, or Lamp., Comm., 8, 11,) with the "Hostis divum atque hominum," pronounced upon him dead. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XVII. 10. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXIII. 2.

[6] From January to March inclusive, 193. Id., ib., 1 *et seq.*, 9, 10. Capit., Pert., 4, 11, 15. Hero., II. 1, 2, 5.

[7] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXIII. 11. Spart., Jul., 2. Hero., II. 6.

magnificence. We of the Senate, too, were there in our robes. But the multitude thought only of him, and strove to see and to hear him, regarding him as altogether a different being from what he had been."[8] Yet it was the triumph of the army rather than of the general who had been declared the sovereign. He remained "what he had been," the subject, not the ruler of the imperial armies. "Pay court to the troops," was the dying advice of Severus to his sons, "and let all the rest go."[9] He had done what he recommended. The Pannonian legions, the first to hail him Emperor, were rewarded with the greatest largess that ever sovereign, says the imperial biographer, bestowed.[10] To the whole army, enriched and honored as it had never been, Severus threw open the Prætorian ranks, the highest to which most of the legionaries aspired.[11]

To seek for signs of liberty amongst the Heathen subjects of such an Emperor, one must consort with freebooters. Bullas, an Italian of that name, found no other way of resisting the imperial oppression than in arming six hundred men, chiefly slaves, with whom he spread terror amongst his countrymen and their rulers. Holding the great highway between Rome and Brundisium, Bullas made himself master

[8] Ap. Xiph., LXXIV. 1, 2. So Hero., II. 4; Spart., Sev., 7. Didius Julianus was put to death, while Pescennius Niger and Clodius Albinus were successively overcome, the former in 194, the latter in 197. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXIV. 6 *et seq.*, LXXV. 4 *et seq.*; Hero., II. 15, III. 1 *et seq.*

[9] *Τοὺς στρατιώτας πλουτίζετε, τῶν ἄλλων πάντων καταφρονεῖτε.* Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXVI. 15.

[10] Spart., Sev., 5. So Hero., II. 11.

[11] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXIV. 1, 2. Hero., III. 8, 13, 15.

of all the south of Italy. In vain were his followers apprehended. He rescued them. In vain was he pursued. He seized the officer from Rome, and, shaving his head, ordered him to return with the message that his masters must feed their slaves, if they would not see the bondman everywhere turn into the brigand. Two years passed when Bullas was surprised by a troop of cavalry. "Why didst thou take to robbery?" asked the commander. "Why didst thou take to service?" was all the reply. The undaunted captive was straightway hurled amongst the wild beasts of the amphitheatre.[12]

Severus had reigned eighteen years[13] when he left his throne to his sons, Bassianus and Geta. It was at first proposed to divide the Empire between the brothers.[14] But the elder, or the soldiers of the elder, prevented the division by murdering the younger, with his partisans.[15] The survivor, Bassianus, Antoninus, or Caracalla,[16] as he was variously styled, reigned for five years longer. Caracalla extended the right of Roman citizenship to all his subjects nominally free.[17] The object, apparently, was to provide additional means for his own prodigalities or for those of his troops; there being a tax which none but citizens were obliged to pay. But the demands of the army were more and more difficult to be satisfied. The sword of a soldier cut short the imbecile but oppressive career of Caracalla.[18]

[12] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXVI. 10.

[13] Until 211.

[14] Hero., IV. 3.

[15] "Iisdem diebus occisi sunt innumeri." Spart., Ant. Car., 4.

[16] "A vestimento quod populo dederat demisso usque ad talos." Id., ib., 9.

[17] Ulpian., ap. Digest., lib. I. tit. V., XVII.

[18] 217. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXVIII. 4–6.

A successor was chosen from amongst the legions in the person of Opilius Macrinus, a Mauretanian.[19] He was soon obliged to yield to Avitus, the reputed son of Caracalla, proclaimed by the troops in Syria.[20] The new sovereign assumed the name of Elagabalus, the deity of whom he had hitherto been a priest. His reign, more shameful to the sovereign and to the subjects than any hitherto endured, was terminated by his murder. His cousin, also declared to be the son of Caracalla, succeeded under the name of Alexander Severus.[21]

Some years before his accession, Septimius Severus married Domna, a maiden of Emesa, in Syria, because her natal hour foretold her espousal by a sovereign.[22] Her sister Mæsa had two daughters, of whom one, Soæmias, was the mother of Elagabalus, and the other, Mamæa, of Alexander Severus. The mothers and the grandmother exercised whatever authority was spared to the sovereign by their dominant soldiers. Mæsa, of course, was the superior. Soæmias, who loved authority, had not only her Senate of women, but her seat in the Senate of men.[23] Mamæa was not without her love of dominion. But her passion was for gold.[24] It was not the first time that the imperial court

[19] Capit., Macr., 6. Lamp., Diad., 7.

[20] 218. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXVIII. 37, 38.

[21] 222. Lamp., Elag., 17. Hero., v. 8. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXIX. 20.

[22] Spart., Sev., 3.

[23] Lamp., Elag., 4, 12.

[24] The Emperor Julian, in his "Cæsars," (p. 32), reproaches Alexander Severus for yielding to his mother's avarice.

had submitted to female control. But the power of woman had never risen so high or continued so long.

It could not, however, stand against the power of the troops. Mamæa had chosen for her counsellor as well as for her son's teacher, the great civilian, Domitius Ulpianus.[25] To extend the imperial authority, as far as possible, over the military, Ulpian was made Præfect of the Prætorians.[26] Soon after his appointment, a conflict between his Prætorians and the Roman populace broke out in the streets where it lasted three successive days. The triumphant soldiery set fire to the city. It is a natural conjecture that the tumult was a serious outbreak of the troops against Ulpian, or against Alexander himself, who had the credit of having attempted to reform, that is to control them. At all events, it does not appear to have been long after that the Prætorians forced their way into the palace, demanding the instant execution of their Præfect. Alexander would have resisted them. But they wreaked their vengeance before his eyes.[27] In less than seven years, the Emperor and his mother Mamæa fell by the swords of the soldiers whom he was leading in a northern campaign.[28]

Upon the frontiers there were threatening omens. Septimius Severus, claiming to be victorious in the East, had twice been repelled from a fortress in

[25] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXX. 1, 2. Hero., VI. 1.

[26] Zosimus, Ann , I. 11.

[27] 228. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXX. 2 *et seq.* On the so-called reforms of the army by Alexander Severus, see Tillemont's summary of the imperial biography, Hist. des Emp., tom. III. pp. 200, 201.

[28] 235. Hero., VI. 8, 9.

Mesopotamia.[29] Caracalla had bought the show of conquest in Germany.[30] His example had been followed by Macrinus in a treaty with the Parthian monarch.[31] A new foe was rising in the East,[32] while the ancient enemies of the West and the North were still in arms.[33] The soldiery who ruled, could not defend the Empire.

Whatever the Heathen suffered in consequence of these perils and these revolutions, the Christians suffered with them. "If the Empire be disturbed," says Tertullian, "its subjects are disturbed. And we amongst them, though we be separated from the multitude, must have our part in the general distress. There is another reason why we should pray for the safety of the Emperors, nay for that of all Roman interests. For we know that the destruction impending over the universe, that the end of the world now menacing the most dreadful afflictions, can be stayed only by the continuance of the Empire..... Therefore," declares the Christian, "do we pray for our Emperors, for their ministers, and for all the powers of Government, in order that we may have peace, and that the end of things may be delayed."[34]

The Christians suffered not only with, but from

[29] Hatra or Atra. Hero., III. 9. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXV. 10. Many of the troops attached to the cause of Pescennius Niger had gone over to the Parthians. Hero., III. 4.

[30] Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXVII. 14.

[31] Id., ib, LXXVIII. 27.

[32] "Parthos *et Persas* vincat!" is the exclamation of the Senate as early as at the accession of Alexander Severus. Lamprid., Alex. Sev., 7.

[33] Especially in Britain and Germany.

[34] "Pro rerum quiete, pro mora finis." Tertull., Apol., 39. The previous passages are from ib., 31, 32.

the Heathen. All that troubled the latter was charged to the Christians. It was their seditiousness, according to the Heathen, far more than the license of the soldiery or the shame of the sovereign that threatened the public safety. "Of every military defeat," writes Tertullian, "of every popular distress, the Christians are supposed to be the cause. If the Tiber riseth or the Nile doth not rise, if the heavens stand fast or the earth moveth, if there be famine or pestilence, it is always, 'The Christians to the lions!'"[35] The Christians had proved their powers defensive and offensive. They had become "the more numerous portion," so their writer declares, "in every district."[36] The animosity against them could not but be strengthened.

It was shared by the soldiery. Accustomed to make and to unmake sovereigns, they would not bear with subjects not only asserting, but exercising independence. The liberty belonging to the men of peace could not but be opposed by the dominion belonging to the men of war. Everywhere there arose fresh conflicts.[37]

Apollonius was a Senator of Rome. Arrested during the reign of Commodus on the charge of being a Christian, he was brought before the Senate. Instead of yielding at once, as his Heathen colleagues would have done, Apollonius read a labored defence.[38] But he was condemned.[39] A

[35] Apol., 40.
[36] Tert., Ad Scap., 2.
[37] "Quotidie obsidemur, quotidie prodimur." Tert., Apol., 7.
[38] "Insigne volumen composuit quod in Senatu legit." Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 42.
[39] Hier., as above, and Ep. 83. Eus., v. 21. Ruinart fixes the year at about 185.

signal for persecution was thus given by the authorities. It was not long before the military responded by an edict of the Emperor Severus forbidding any further conversions to Christianity.[40]

Amongst the first to meet their doom were five young converts at Carthage.[41] Two of the five were women; one of noble birth named Perpetua, the other a slave, by name Felicitas. The narrative of their sufferings begins in Perpetua's words: "We were still with the persecutors, and my father, out of love for me, was still endeavoring to shake my resolution. 'Father,' I asked him, 'do you see that pitcher lying yonder?' And he answered, 'I do.' I said, 'Can it be called by any other name than that which it bears?' And he replied, 'No.' 'So I cannot call myself anything else than what I am, that is, a Christian?' Whereupon my father seized me as though he would have pulled out my eyes; but he only frightened me, and then went away, foiled in the wicked arguments which he had used." Left alone with her fellow-prisoners, Perpetua was baptized and taught, as she says, "to pray for nothing besides patience." The captives were then thrust together into a dungeon, where, in addition to heat and physical distress, they had to bear the violence of their guards and the condolence of the friends who came to visit them. Perpetua, especially, was incessantly harassed by the tears and expostulations of her relatives, shocked as they were

[40] About 202. Spart., Sev., 17. Eus., VI. 1, 7.

[41] "Adolescentes catachumeni." Acta Perp. et Felic., ap. Ruinart, 1. This was in 202 or 203.

that she should forget her rank and consent to the degradation of being imprisoned with a slave and others equally ignoble in Heathen eyes. She asked but one favor, that she might keep her infant with her. That being granted, "the dungeon," as she wrote, "became a palace to me, and I liked better to be there than in any other place on earth."[42]

"One day, as we were eating our meal," her account continues, "we were suddenly dragged away to be examined. On the report of our appearance, the forum was speedily filled with an immense crowd. We ascended the platform. The others, on being questioned, confessed their faith. It then came to my turn, when my father suddenly appeared with my child. Drawing me aside, he said beseechingly, 'Have compassion on your babe.' And Hilarian, the Governor, himself spoke up, saying, 'Spare thy father's gray hairs, spare thy helpless infant! sacrifice for the safety of thy rulers!'[43] But I answered, 'I cannot sacrifice.' 'Art thou a Christian?' asked Hilarian. And I replied 'I am?'" The amazement of the Governor could not have been so great as that of the multitude who heard a highborn lady, bound to life by every attractive tie, declare herself of the same faith with the slave Felicitas and the three young men whom none there knew. "Then the Governor pronounces sentence," she relates, "condemning us all to the beasts; and we return with joy to the prison."[44] They were soon

[42] Acta, 2–5.

[43] That is, Severus and Caracalla, then the colleague of his father.

[44] Acta, 6–8.

after transported to another place of confinement nearer the arena where they were doomed to die.

Some days went by, during which the prisoners were allowed to receive their fellow-believers or their relatives. Perpetua was again disturbed by a visit from her father, who once more entreated her to take pity on his age and his affection. The spirit of the Christian daughter was stronger than that of the Heathen parent. Perpetua was left to await her end in prayers and visions which she describes. "I have made up this account," she concludes, "to the day before the games; and if any one will write of what passes upon the day of the games, I wish it may be done." [45]

Her wish was granted. "We are not worthy," writes an unknown hand, "to narrate the fulfilment of this great glory. Yet we would carry out the charge of the blessed Perpetua, in obedience to the faith for which she suffered." [46]

After some other statements, the narrative turns to Felicitas the slave. Far gone with child at the time of her arrest, she had expressed no fear except that she might not be delivered in season to suffer with her companions. "And they also," are the touching words, "were greatly grieved for fear of leaving so true a friend alone." Together the prisoners prayed that her hour might come. Soon the pains of labor began. As she showed signs of great suffering, one of the jailors tauntingly asked, "If thou art in such pain now, what wilt thou do when thou art exposed to the beasts about which

[45] Acta, 9–10. [46] Ib., 16.

thou didst care so little when thou wouldst not sacrifice?" "Now," was the answer of the Christian slave, "now I am the sufferer. But then, there will be Another to suffer for me, because I also shall be suffering for Him."[47] This was the third day before the games.

The writer reverts to the account which he had undertaken to give of Perpetua. On her the others appear to have relied as on a guardian presence. Her remonstrances alone had any effect in softening the rigor of their persecutors. To her "constancy and sublimity of mind" they appealed for inspiration to themselves.[48] Was this a woman? Was this a woman of rank? The Christians might not be surprised. But the Heathen were confounded. Where was the effeminancy of the noble? Where was the weakness of the female? Not in Perpetua. The demeanor of her companions excited less amazement. But they were all regarded with feelings in which wonder was mingled with anger, inquisitiveness with malevolence.

The meal of the prisoners on the evening before their execution was eaten in a hall crowded with spectators to behold them at their supper. They manifested the same constancy that they had exhibited at their trial. Some of them laughed at the curiosity of which they were the objects. Others spoke more solemnly of the judgment to be pronounced upon their executioners by their God. One

[47] "Modo ego patior quod patior, illic autem Alius erit in me qui patietur pro me, quia et ego pro Illo passura sum." Acta, 15.

[48] Acta, 16.

of the young men, by name Saturus, rose up at the table, exclaiming, "Is not to-morrow enough for you to see us and to vent your hatred upon us? To-day, ye gather round our table as if ye were our friends. To-morrow, ye will come out as open enemies. Yet mark ye well our faces, that ye may recognise us in the hour of agony!" Many who had come to scoff withdrew in reverence at the courage displayed within the prison walls.[49]

The day of death arrived. Together the Christians proceeded from their dungeon to the amphitheatre, "as if," says the narrator, "it had been to Heaven." Perpetua came forth with a psalm upon her lips. The young men menaced the multitude and even dared to threaten the governor who had condemned them. "Thou hast judged us," they cried, as they passed before him in the arena, "but God will judge thee!" At this the populace demanded to have them scourged. Instead of being silenced, the sufferers were animated by the resemblance of their trials to those of their Divine Master.[50]

The youths were exposed to the beasts. Two of the three were slain. Meanwhile, Perpetua and Felicitas had been disrobed and inclosed in nets. But when they were brought forth, the very populace exclaimed against the shame of stripping women, the one accustomed to honor, the other still racked with the throes of childbirth. As soon as they were clad, they were again cast before the wild cow selected to be their executioner. Twice tossed

[49] Acta, 17. [50] Ib., 18.

upon the horns of the ferocious animal, Perpetua was still able to drag herself to the aid of Felicitas, too weak to rise after being once thrown down. Both stood up hand in hand. The multitude, again touched with compassion, cried out that a respite should be given to the undaunted sufferers. Perpetua woke as from a swoon to find herself removed from the arena. "When," she asked, "are we to be thrown to the cow?" But far from showing any fear as her recollection returned, she said to her brother who was standing by with a Christian, "Be strong in the faith, and love one another, nor be overcast by our sufferings."[51] They were her last words.

Immediately she was brought back with Felicitas into the arena, where the third of their male companions was now meeting his fate. The spectators called out to have the three put to death by the sword. Whereupon they rose of their own accord, and silently embracing one another, they stood in the centre of the arena. One by one, they fell; the last of the three to die being Perpetua, who guided the hand of the gladiator appointed to despatch her.[52] "Amongst all the names of martyrs," exclaims Augustine, two centuries later, "shine out the names of Perpetua and Felicitas, the holy handmaids of the Lord."[53]

Another woman, a slave also, like Felicitas, is to be remembered amongst the noblest Christians of

[51] Acta, 20.

[52] Ib., 21.

[53] Serm. 281, ed. Paris alt. "Perpetua, fortissima martyr," says Tertullian, De Anima, 55.

the age. The persecution that had appeared at Carthage raged with peculiar violence at Alexandria,[54] where Potamiæna, a girl of great beauty, was living in the service of an intemperate and licentious master. By him, infuriated at her resistance to his desires, Potamiæna was given into custody as a Christian. Though put to foul torture, and threatened with still fouler outrage, the simple maiden baffled both her judge and her master. "Bid me be burned piecemeal," she exclaimed, when condemned to be plunged naked in a cauldron of boiling pitch, "that ye may see how great patience hath been given to me by Christ whom ye know not."[55] Her mother, who seems to have been arrested with her, was with her condemned to the same death.[56]

As they were led away from the tribunal, the crowd in the streets pressed round about them with insults and threats of violence. Alone of all the thousands in Alexandria, an officer of the army, Basilides by name, appointed by the judge to superintend the execution of the women, was brave enough to defend them against the abuse of the multitude. Him Potamiæna promised, as she was hurried on, that she would pray to her Lord in his behalf. Nor would it be long, she said, before he would have his reward. The frightful sentence pronounced upon her was executed to the letter; but Potamiæna died, unshrinking to the last.[57]

[54] Eus., VI. 1, *et seq.*

[55] Pallad., Hist. Lausiac., 3. ap. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. I. pp. 286, 287.

[56] Eus., VI. 5.

[57] "And thus," as Origen remarks, (Cont. Cels., III. 10,) "not only men are willing to follow Christ into the wilderness, but women likewise, unhindered by their feminine weakness."

The officer who had interfered in behalf of the unfriended slave could not unmoved have beheld her death. Three nights afterwards, as Basilides related, Potamiæna appeared to him, and placing a crown upon his head, declared that her prayer in his favor had been granted. Impressed by the vision of which the loveliness would have delighted him, even though he had been insensible to its solemnity, Basilides resolved to prepare himself for his promised recompense.

Accordingly, on being carelessly asked by his brother officers to take some oath, he replied with great earnestness that, having become a Christian, he could not swear at all. They supposed him to be in jest. But when he persevered in his assertions, they hurried him before the judge whose mandates he had lately executed without a remonstrance. Now, on the contrary, he refused to obey the behests of the magistrate. The comrades of the accused, indignant that one of their number should have espoused a cause against which the soldiery had declared, probably urged the instant condemnation of Basilides. He was at once committed to prison.

Excited by the news, the Christians left their hiding places to inquire the cause of so sudden and so singular a conversion. Basilides informed them of the pledge and the promise which he had received from the martyred Potamiæna. At his request or at the instance of his visitors, the rite of baptism was immediately administered to him. The slave had so changed the heart of the soldier, that, forgetting his rank and scorning the offers of comrades and supe-

riors, he sought only the rewards which had been promised him by her. It was a glorious martyrdom, says the devout historian.[58]

Such were the fresh conflicts between the Christians and their persecutors. An interval of peace happened soon after the accession of Caracalla,[59] who, with his troops, was intent upon wider havoc than could be inflicted upon any single class. Alexander Severus went so far as to favor the Christians.[60] It perhaps occurred to him or to his mother Mamæa,[61] that he might strengthen himself against the soldiery by bringing forward the subjects on whom the soldiery had been wreaking outrage. But the Christians had no such support to offer him as he desired. Nor had he any ability to defend them as they thought they required.

All the more impressive was the confidence of the Christians in themselves. They seem to have felt their power to bear up through the conflicts in which they were engaged. Still more did they feel the power of the principles for which they were contending. One of their number, apparently at this very period,[62] sets forth their faith before "all men," as

[58] Eus., v. 5. The year was about 205.

[59] An amnesty declared by him is supposed to have included the Christians. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXVII. 3. Spart., Carac., 3. Cf. Ruinart, Acta Mart., Præf., 47. Caracalla was said to have had a Christian for a nurse or for a preceptor. Tert., Ad Scap., 4.

[60] Lamp., Alex. Sev., 22, 49. The Emperor was said to have kept an image of Christ "inter divos et optimos" in his oratory. Id., ib., 29, 31. The accounts in Id., ib., 43, 45 and 51, are very doubtful.

[61] Who sent for Origen to visit her at Antioch. Eus., VI. 21, 28. Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 24.

[62] Certainly so, if he was really Hippolytus, Bishop of Portus near Rome, as M. Bunsen alleges. See his work on Hippolytus and his Age, vol. I. pp. 16 *et seq.* Eusebius (VI. 20, 22,) places Hippolytus in the time of Alexander Severus.

"the faith of those who are not persuaded by empty words, nor influenced by the impulses of their hearts, nor fascinated by the charm of eloquence in arguments, but who are submissive to the words uttered with Divine power."[63] "Such, then," continues the Christian, "is the true doctrine about the Deity, O ye men, Greeks and Barbarians, Chaldeans and Assyrians, Egyptians and Libyans, Indians and Ethiopians, Celts and ye ruling Romans, all, in fine, who dwell in Europe, Asia and Africa. To you I offer myself as a counsellor, being the benevolent disciple of the Benevolent Word, in order that ye, coming to us, may be taught by us who is the True God, and what is His well designed creation. . . . . For whatever trials thou hast encountered as a man, these He hath given to thee because thou art a man, but whatever things belong to an immortal, these He hath promised to give to thee, when thou shalt become immortal. . . . . If thou art obedient to His holy laws, if thou becomest a good disciple of Him who is good, then shalt thou, resembling Him, be honored by Him."[64] Such as could join with him who wrote thus were in no danger of being overpowered.

[63] Omn. Hær. Refut., x. 33, p. 337, ed. Paris.

[64] Ib., x 34, pp. 338, 339.

CHAPTER VI.

ANTAGONISM.

"When the Christians were forced to be antipodes to other men"
FULLER, *Holy State*, XI.

THE spirit of the Christians was high. But it was also stern. Day by day their resolution had been strengthened, their cause had been sanctified. They gave themselves to what was continually becoming holier in their eyes with an ardor that was continually becoming intenser in their hearts. The earnestness of their devotion deepened into severity. No other feelings but their own seemed to deserve any consideration. No other purposes but their own appeared to merit any regard. The conflicts that had been fought, the defences that had been reared, were as nothing in proportion to those required by the times at hand. Behind, before, around them, the Christians saw none but foes.

This was true, in an especial degree, of the Catholics. They had borne the brunt of past contests. The losses had been theirs. The triumphs, also, had been theirs. It was for them, as they believed, to achieve new triumphs. New losses, it might be,

were likewise in store for them. But they must arm themselves. They must fight on. The earth was full of their adversaries. Men the most hostile, principles the most fatal to their faith, were everywhere in the ascendant. With whom could the Catholics be at peace?

Not, surely, with the Heathen. Who else besides the Heathen had been the persecutors of the Catholics? Who but the Heathen were still their oppressors? From the slave or the artisan up to the courtier or the soldier, there was no rank amongst the Heathen but regarded the Christians as beneath attention, beneath sympathy, beneath anything but oppression. There might be peace for a day. But the morrow would be ushered in with the cries of the pursuers, of the murderers. No event of a common nature, no revolution according to the ordinary course, would humble the Heathen. They were too powerful. They were too numerous. There could be no other means of opposing them but by unyielding resistance.

Nor could there be peace with the Heretics. They excited greater apprehension, deeper abhorrence than the Heathen. The latter were foes whose animosity was both natural and expected. It could be guarded against; it could be accounted for. But the Heretics, believers, as most of them professed to be, in the same Saviour, in the same Deity, were adversaries whose opposition must have seemed as singular as it was dangerous. They stood on the same ground with the Catholics. That is, it was the ground to which they were driven together by their

common enemies. They were not always distinguished by the unbelievers. Nor could they always distinguish one another. The hostility of the Heretic was frequently unexpected. It constantly appeared unnatural. He was as a deserter from the besieged city, as a betrayer of the oppressed household, an object of detestation and of fear. Between such as he and the Catholic there could be naught, the latter believed, but unrelenting contention.

Of all this there was one inevitable consequence. The temper of the Catholic Christians hardened. They were more earnest to act on the defensive. They were more inclined to take the offensive. There could be no peace, no peace-making. Instead of uniting with the Heretic where both could stand uninjured, the Catholic defied him to incessant altercation. Instead of inducing the Heathen to come over to them, the Catholics seemed to repel the idea of converting their foes. To be faithful to the law of love, they thought themselves bound to contend, to dread, to hate. This was no ordinary strife. It was what we have called antagonism.[1]

It found its advocates. Of these none could vie in vigor or in sincerity with Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian of Carthage. The one had his home in a city whose chief characteristic consisted in the visionary speculations of its teachers, whether Heathen or Christian, Catholic or Heretical. The other belonged to a community remarkable for the diver-

[1] "The Christian . . . . had gained the stern character of a warrior." State of Man subsequent to Christianity, Part I. p. 151.

sity of rules and of habits amongst its members.[2] In the Carthaginian community nothing seemed a greater evil than the prevailing license of discipline. Nothing could be more deplored by the severer converts at Alexandria than the prevailing license of doctrine. Both places were undoubtedly in a condition to inspire a Christian with the desire of reforming their extravagances when Clement and Tertullian appeared as the second century closed.

Clement is supposed to have been a native of Athens.[3] After various wanderings,[4] he took his place at the feet of Pantænus, originally a Stoic philosopher, but at that time the head of the Christian school in Alexandria.[5] It may be conjectured that the disposition which had led Pantænus, when a Heathen, to embrace the Stoic doctrine, would render him a rigorous teacher when a Christian.[6] If this was so, he had a submissive pupil in Clement, who, after being appointed a Presbyter in the Alexandrian community, was selected to serve as the assistant, and at times the substitute of his teacher. Several years afterwards, he became the head of the school.[7] During the troubles in which Potamiæna died, Clement was at Antioch and at Jerusalem.[8] A fragment of a letter to the Antioch Christians from

[2] The conversions in Carthage, as throughout the north of Africa, had been exceedingly rapid, and therefore exceedingly irregular. Tert., ad Scap., 5; Apol., 37, 40.

[3] Cave, Apostolici, p. 133.

[4] He gives an account of his various teachers in the Stromata, I. 1, p. 332. He is thought to have come to Alexandria in 181.

[5] Which Eusebius (VI. 3,) calls "the School of Catachesis." This was the application of philosophy to the Christian doctrine.

[6] Eus., V. 10, 19, VI. 14.

[7] About 211. Eus., VI. 6.

[8] Clem., Strom., IV. 10, p. 597. Eus., IV. 10.

the Bishop of Jerusalem describes the energy of nature in Clement that rose superior to the trials of exile. "This I have written to you, my very good brethren, to send by the excellent Presbyter Clement, a virtuous and a distinguished man, whom ye know now, and will soon know better. His coming here by the providence and dispensation of our Master, hath much confirmed and increased the church of the Lord."[9] One of whom this could be said when he was apparently but a fugitive from persecution, must have labored still more determinedly in times of peace.

To comprehend the work which Clement undertook, we must turn to his writings.[10] Whether composed in his exile or after his return to Alexandria, they were dictated by the experiences of a long career. In the first place, they were not addressed to all men. Not all men could enter into the doctrine or the discipline which he intended to prescribe. "I do not write for parade," he says. "But men must not essay, rashly or inexpertly, to peruse these commentaries. . . . . For they contain the truth interspersed with philosophical discourses, or rather covered and concealed therein."[11] It seems as if this had been a warning to such as were, or were disposed to be Heretics. The warning to such as were inclined to remain Heathen was equally solemn. "Human schools are not to attempt to teach what men most wish to know."[12] This exclusion of hear-

[9] Alexander, ap. Eus., VI. 11.

[10] They are enumerated by Eusebius (VI. 13) and Jerome (Cat. Scr. Eccl., 38.)

[11] Strom., I. 1, pp. 322, 326.

[12] Cohort. ad Gent., 11, p. 86.

ers from his presence was the great mark of the antagonism which Clement had espoused.

But whom did he admit? Were all who ranked themselves amongst the Catholic Christians invited to learn from the Alexandrian? Not so. From the chosen Catholics there was a yet more chosen band to whom Clement gave the name of the Gnostics, or the Wise. These were summoned to hear the teacher of Alexandria. These being, according to him, "intelligent and clear-sighted,"[13] could understand the injunctions which they received. Understanding, they could also obey. "The Gnostic," says Clement, "will never make life his end and aim. He will rather seek to be forever happy and blessed as the royal friend of God."[14] He would be the true freeman. "Though any one were to brand him with infamy, exile him, fine him, slay him, he would never be deprived of his liberty.[15] To such, therefore, would the Alexandrian make his appeal.

He pleaded first for faith. While others were dreaming upon their pillows, the disciples of Clement were awakened to see and behold the truth in its reality. "Our faith," he declared, "is divine. . . . . It is the foundation of love. . . . . At first, it is an inclination towards salvation, then fear, and hope, and repentance, uniting with self-control and endurance, lead us to love and to knowledge."[16] "Faith,"

[13] *Ὁ δὴ συνιὼν καὶ διορατικός, οὗτος ἐστιν ὁ Γνωστικός.* Strom., IV. 22.

[14] Ib., IV. 7, p. 587.

[15] *Οὐκ ἀποσπαθήσεται ποτὲ τῆς ἐλευθερίας καὶ κυριωτάτης πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἀγάπης.* Ib., ib.

[16] Ib., II. 6, p. 445.

continued the Alexandrian, "is the strength to gain salvation and the power to achieve everlasting life."[17] "It is both the anticipation and the perfection of all wisdom."[18] The wisdom thus attained is "the contemplation of Heaven." "Man," says Clement, speaking not merely to his own followers, but to the Heathen, "is created to contemplate Heaven. He is, as it were, a celestial creature. And we exhort him to seek the knowledge of God, which is his peculiar and distinctive privilege in contrast with all other living beings. . . . . Labor upon the earth, we say, if thou art a husbandman; but while thou laborest, acquaint thyself with God. Sail on, thou who followest the sea; but as thou sailest, invoke the Heavenly pilot. Hath the knowledge of God come unto thee in military service? Then hear the Commander who ordereth whatever is just."[19] Such was the faith which Clement would have secured against the wavering doctrines of Alexandria and the Christian world.

To maintain his disciples in the faith which he enjoined, Clement prescribed the most rigid rule of life. Hardly a moment of the day or of the night was left out of view in the instructions applying to all ages, all ranks, all callings. Hardly a relation of society was passed over in the exhortations addressed to friends and foes, children and parents, masters and slaves.[20] So far as this was done with gentle-

[17] Strom., II. 12, p. 457.

[18] Ib., II. 7, p. 437. "There is no knowledge without faith, no faith without knowledge." Ib., v. 1, p. 643.

[19] Cohort. ad Gent., 10, p. 80.

[20] See especially the second book of the treatise entitled Pædagogus.

ness, Clement was improving the opportunities of a Christian teacher. But when he urged his disciples to the utmost, he was not so much the teacher as the leader, the combatant. "We must not seem to be," he exclaimed, "we must be free."[21] The freedom on which he insisted was to be reached through severity, if not through strife. At any hazards, the Christians must prove their difference from other men.

"Let us then fly," shouts Clement, "from old habits. Let us fly from them as we would from a perilous promontory, or from the threatening Charybdis, or from the mythic Sirens. For these old habits choke a man. They divert him from the truth. They lead him away from life. They are snares, pitfalls, abysses."[22] Everything that had been in use was to be set aside. It was not enough to refrain from vice or indulgence. Inclinations must be renounced. Tastes must be mortified. "It is a sin," wrote the Alexandrian, "that costly robes or orders should enter into the city of truth. With us, men ought not to smell of perfume, but of virtue. And let women be scented with Christ, that regal ointment, rather than with powders or oils."[23] "We must beware," he wrote again, "of the pleasures which tickle the eyes or the ears. . . . . Our music should be that of the spirit, the sound of the trump wherewith the dead are to be raised."[24] It mattered not how high the aims of the artist or the scholar might be. He must abjure the pursuits that had

[21] Pæd., III. 11, p. 288.
[22] Cohort. ad Gent., 12, p. 91.
[23] Pæd., II. 8, p. 208.
[24] Ib., II. 4, pp. 192, 193.

been followed by those before him. "Methinks," declares Clement, "that since the Word Himself hath come to us from Heaven, we ought no more to seek for human teaching, whether it be that of Athens or of the rest of Greece." [25]

All that was Heathen excited a holy horror in the Alexandrian. "Ye have done violence to human nature," he cries, addressing the votaries of the ancient religion. "Ye disbelieve in God, inasmuch as ye are unable to endure restraint. Whatever is better, that ye hate; whatever is worse, that ye honor. Spectators of virtue, ye are the champions of vice." [26] It was in no unforgiving spirit, however, that the Alexandrian thus reproved the unbelievers. He wrote as he declared "in love of men." [27] The possibility of converting the Heathen was not forgotten. Oppose them as he would, Clement remembered that they might yet be his adherents. "The course of truth is one," he said. "But various streams pour into it as into an overflowing river." [28]

The dark days, however, continued. The Christian was directed to combat the Heathen even as the Heathen were urged to combat the Christian. But the unbeliever was so much the most powerful, that the courage of the believer often failed. Convinced that it was necessary to reanimate his brethren, Clement bids them regard their "inheritance" as "the eternal possession bestowed on them by the

[25] Cohort. ad Gent., 11, p. 86. Still he allows the use of learning "as far as it relates to the truth." Strom., I. 9, p. 342, VI. 10, pp. 779, 780.

[26] Cohort. ad Gent., 4, p. 53.

[27] Ib., 12, p. 95.

[28] Strom., I. 5, p. 331.

Lord." Did they preserve this, they might resign "the gold and the earthly honor" which their persecutors were able to take away.[29] Without venturing to preach resistance to the laws by which persecution was maintained,[30] Clement hinted that there might soon be a revolution in the Empire.[31]

With all his ardor, with all his exclusiveness, the Alexandrian had not given himself entirely up to antagonism. He was of too mild a nature to be always in arms. From time to time he hangs out a flag of peace. Only when the strife rages close about him, does he seem to have plunged desperately amongst the combatants. The weapons which Clement was too gentle to wield fell into more resolute hands. He had but begun the antagonism which another was to continue.

Tertullian was the son of an imperial officer.[32] In the distinctions and enjoyments attached to that position he spent his youth. Instead of being numbered with the Christians from his early years, he knew them only, as he confesses, to rail at them.[33] However his conversion may have been wrought, it added to the Carthaginian Christians a convert more fervent than most of their number. He had not hesitated to join them, when he was convinced of their excellences. He did not hesitate to attempt to re-

[29] Cohort. ad Gent., 10, 11, pp. 75, 77, 78.

[30] On the contrary he commends prudence in time of persecution. Strom., IV. 10, p. 597.

[31] Ib., I. 24, 26, pp. 416, 421.

[32] "Patre centurione Proconsule." Hier., Cat. Script. Eccl., 53. The full name of Tertullian, Q. Septimius Florens Tertullianus, seems to denote station.

[33] "Hæc et nos risimus aliquando." Apol., 18. "Et ipsi retro fuimus cæci sine Domini lumine." De Pœn., 1.

form them, when he became acquainted with their infirmities. To battle with the Heretic or the Heathen was not enough for him. He was made a Presbyter by his brethren. But he was all the more determined to contend with them.[34]

"For what," he asked of the Heathen, "what do we Christians show for ourselves, except that wisdom in which we cease to adore the frivolous works of human hands? What but that abstinence with which we refrain from others' possessions, that modesty which we violate not even by a look, that compassion with which we stoop to the distressed? What but that truth through which we offend? What but that liberty for which we die?"[35] The impassioned Christian could not endure to see his brethren gainsay the position which he had assumed for them before the Heathen. "Fall on your knees," he charges the penitent Christians, "fall before God's beloved ones, and entreat their intercession."[36] "If they are Heretics, "he says of some who were going astray, "they cannot be Christians."[37] "They must be forced," he adds, "to do their duty."[38] "Men are not born Christians," he exclaims, "they are made such."[39] With these convictions, the Presbyter of Carthage engaged in fierce contentions.

He stood the champion of the Christian faith. "We have had no need of curiosity," he said,

[34] "A me sempre miglior parrà il consiglio
Ove ha più fatica e di periglio."
Tasso.

[35] Ad Nationes, I. 4. "Nec aliunde noscibiles quam de emendatione vitiorum pristinorum." Ad Scap., 2.

[36] De Pœn., 9.

[37] De Præsc. Hær., 37.

[38] Cont. Gnost., 2.

[39] "Fiunt non nascuntur Christiani." Apol., 18.

"since Christ Jesus, no need of inquisitiveness since the Gospels. In believing, we desire nothing more than to believe."[40] "God will never be hid," he urged against the Gnostics, "God will never fail. He will be always perceived, always heard, nay He will be always seen according to His will."[41] A faith like this had no dependence upon mystery or reverie. "These are the doctrines," exclaims Tertullian in reference to the speculations that had been pursued amongst the Christians, "doctrines of men and demons, sprung with prurient ears from the ingenuity of worldly wisdom."[42]

This rigidity of doctrine led to equal rigidity of discipline. On this Tertullian grew still more earnest. What he called carnal faith[43] was so utterly abhorrent to him, that he seems to have had no compassion upon those who allowed themselves to fall into indulgence or transgression. His severity increased with the difficulty which he found in carrying out his purposes. He is as earnest that the woman should wear her veil as that she should be really modest.[44] He is as vehement against frequenting the theatres as against worshipping in the temples of the Heathen.[45] Sometimes he inveighs

[40] De Præsc. Hær., 7.

[41] "Habet Deus," he adds, "testimonia totum hoc quod sumus et in quo sumus." Adv. Marc., I. 10.

[42] De Præsc. Hær., 7. So Adv. Marc., I. 13, De An., 3.

[43] "Animalis fides." De Jejun., 1. The name of "Psychici" is constantly employed to denote the class against whom he was expostulating.

[44] De Virg. Vel., passim.

[45] De Spect., 17. So Clement in the Pædagogus, III. 11. Clement had shown the same earnestness about such matters. He went into great detail, for instance, about the proper covering for the feet and the proper furniture for the house of a Christian. Pæd., II. 3, 9, 11.

in general terms against the luxuries which he had witnessed at Rome.[46] But he more frequently turns against the individual offender, not merely to rebuke him, but to thunder in his ears that he can never look for pardon, except through the unexpected compassion of his God.[47] The license of discipline amongst the Carthaginian converts could not be more strenuously condemned.

More and more excited against them, their Presbyter reached the same ground which Montanus the Phrygian had occupied a quarter of a century before. "This Spirit," cried Tertullian, adverting to that of which Montanus professed to be the organ, "this, next after Christ, shall be our guide."[48] "We are dead," he mournfully confessed, "in our sins."[49] "Yet at length," he added, "and by the Paraclete," that is, the Spirit, "is righteousness arrived at its maturity."[50] "We will build a new Church," he cheerfully promised, "whereof spiritual life shall be the foundation, and wherein the power of God, not that of His servants, shall be acknowledged."[51] Yet the reformer had no intention of leaving the Church Catholic. "We have the same faith," he says, "the same God, the same Christ, the same hope, the same sacraments. We are one and the same church."[52] "But the recognition and the defence of the Paraclete," he declared, "divide us from the

[46] De Hab. Mulieb., 7. On his visit to Rome, see Eus., II. 2, and Hier., Cat. Script. Eccl., 53.

[47] De Pudicit., 3, 5. Cf. 16. His earlier opinions were milder. De Patient., 9. De Pœn., 7 *et seq.*, 22.

[48] De Virg. Vel., 1.

[49] De Res. Carn., 47.

[50] De Virg. Vel., 1.

[51] De Pudicit., 21.

[52] De Virg. Vel., 2. So De Jejun., 1.

carnal Christians."[53] On them lay the responsibility for the division between them and him. As for those united with him, he conceived that they were bound to oppose all others.

No one could be severer upon those whom he considered Heretics. "Heresy," argues Tertullian, "is but the custom of the past."[54] "Nor will any one doubt," he adds, "that it is the same as idolatry."[55] No wonder that the Carthaginian buckled on his armor to strive with so menacing a foe. "Thus," he says, "must the question be decided. . . . . With this order of battle must they be opposed."[56]

So with the Heathen. They found a determined opponent in Tertullian. "Let us mourn," he writes, "while they rejoice. But let us rejoice when they mourn."[57] From his strife on earth the Carthaginian looks forward to the future judgment in Heaven. "Then," he exclaims, "there will be another spectacle. That last and everlasting day of judgment, unlooked for and derided by the Heathen, will consume age after age and generation after generation."[58] But we will not follow Tertullian in his wild exultation. That he could extend his passion to another world, proves the excitement of the world in which he lived.

Yet this antagonism was tempered by charity. "We do not tremble," says Tertullian to the Pro-

[53] Adv. Prax., 1.

[54] "Quodcumque adversus veritatem sapit, hoc erit hæresis, etiam vetus consuetudo." De Virg. Vel., 1.

[55] De Præsc. Hær., 40.

[56] De Resur. Carnis, 2.

[57] De Idol., 28.

[58] Ib., 30.

consul of his province, who had begun to persecute the Christians beneath his rule. "Neither are we afraid. . . . . For we united ourselves to this party, with the understanding that we must come to these contentions. . . . . But though we have no fear for ourselves, we do fear for you and for all our enemies, that is to say, our friends. So indeed, are we commanded to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us."[59] In a milder season the spirit of Tertullian would have bloomed in softer emotions.

But the times were too chilly for any tenderness. The opposition of the Christian grows more bitter and more unyielding. "We cannot have you with us," he says to his opponents, "for ye will not join in our sacrifices."[60] Nor would the Christian have anything to do with the pursuits of the Heathen. "If I am called to one of their ceremonies," exclaims Tertullian, "I will not go. Nor will I give counsel, or money, or any sort of aid to such purposes."[61] "If thou thinkest that liberty real," says the Carthaginian to the servant of the Heathen, "that which thou canst get from thy earthly rulers, so as to wish to wear a badge of it, then hast thou returned into a servitude to men which thou mistakest for liberty, then hast thou lost the liberty of Christ which thou mistakest for servitude."[62] The world was but a "prison," according to the ardent Christian. Death was "the great liberator."[63]

[59] Ad Scap., 1.

[60] "Plures denique invenias quos magis periculum voluptatis quam vitæ avocet ab hac secta." De Spect., 2.

[61] De Idol., 16.

[62] De Cor. Mil., 13.

[63] Ad Mart., 2.

But while life continued, the Christian was bound to preserve his independence. "Suppose you are a slave," says Tertullian. "Yet no one can serve two masters. If you wish to be the Lord's disciple, you must take up your cross and follow Him."[64] In other words, the slave, even the slave, was to throw up the labor on which his owner set him, rather than deviate from his duty as a believer. Nor was the believer of any class to submit to oppression endangering his faith. "A Christian is no man's enemy," avers the Carthaginian, "much less the Emperor's.[65] "But no Cæsar," he declares, "can be a Christian."[66] "And for a master," he reiterates, "we have none save God alone."[67]

The same temper appeared in inculcating the relations of the Christians to their ecclesiastical rulers. No such thing as anarchy was to be allowed. It was only the Heretic who lived "without gravity, without authority, without discipline." "With them," says the Carthaginian, "one man is Bishop to-day, and another to-morrow. The Deacon of the day is the morrow's Reader. The priest of to-day is to-morrow's layman. . . . . Nay, most of them have no churches, but wander without a mother, without an abiding-place, without a faith, without a home."[68] Not thus should it be with the Catholic Christians. "They have their chief priest, that is, the Bishop, then their Presbyters and Deacons." But the latter are not to act "without the approval of the Bishop."

[64] De Idol., 12.

[65] Ad Scap., 2.

[66] "Sed et Cæsares credidissent super Christo, si aut Cæsares non essent seculo necessarii, aut si et Christiani potuissent esse Cæsares." Apol., 21.

[67] Ad Scap., 5.

[68] De Præsc. Hær., 41, 42.

Nor are the people to consider "the honor" or "the peace" of their church to be safe unless the episcopal authority stands secure.[69] With all this there was to be no undue dominion. When the Bishop of Rome undertook to declare against the rigid course of such as Tertullian, the latter laughs at the edict of the "Pontifex Maximus, the Bishop of Bishops,"[70] as a vain assertion of supremacy. "Show me, then," he exclaims, "O successor of the Apostles, proofs of thy power, and I will acknowledge it. . . . . But if thou hast obtained a post of discipline alone, in which thou art presiding over a ministry, not a government, who or what art thou to forgive sins? Proving thyself neither a Prophet nor an Apostle, thou art therefore destitute of that power to which forgiveness of sins belongs."[71] "I," says Tertullian, "have looked to the churches founded by the Apostles themselves or by Apostolic men, and earlier, I think, than some people."[72] He would bear with no revival of centralization.

Thus strove Tertullian.[73] Alike with the Bishop and the layman, with the sovereign and the subject, with the Heathen and the Heretic, the Carthaginian contended. "We are called," he declared, "to God's warfare."[74] He supposed it to consist in onslaughts upon his fellow-creatures. Antagonism could no farther go.

[69] De Baptismo, 17.

[70] De Pudicit., 1.

[71] Ib., 21.

[72] "Et puto ante quosdam." De Virg. Vel., 2.

[73] The reader who would know more of him can consult Neander's volume entitled "Antignosticus, or the Spirit of Tertullian."

[74] "Vocati sumus ad militiam Dei." Ad Mart., 3.

How did this tell upon the liberty of the Christians? Would the powers which they employed in combating with one another and their opponents increase the right to liberty? Would the law under which they combated confirm them in the possession of liberty? On the contrary. The law of love was not the law under which they struggled. The powers evoked by the law of love were not the powers with which they were doing battle.

There is another point to be observed. The champions of antagonism exerted themselves on much narrower principles than their predecessors. Alarmed by the perils of the open sea, they took to the roadstead or the harbor. There they might ride in comparative safety. But where would be the generous daring, where the unfaltering trust with which the earlier believers had braved the dangers of the deep? The Christians who drew back showed few signs of liberty in comparison with those of the preceding period.

Nor would they be safe in the port where they sought refuge. The confusion there was as threatening as the agitation of the ocean.[75] After all the collisions that had occurred, there was no tranquillity. After all the renunciations of false creed or of false rule, the discipline and the doctrine of the Catholics were still unsettled. It was not yet decided what would come from following after Clement and Tertullian.

75 "Perdonóla la mar, matóla el puerto." LOPE DE VEGA.

CHAPTER VII.

LIBERALITY.

"Christianity itself cannot be improved; but men's views, and estimate, and comprehension of Christianity may be indefinitely improved."

WHATELY, *Kingdom of Christ*, p. 124.

THE effect of the antagonism advocated amongst the Catholic Christians became more and more evident. It had seemed to be their safeguard against the principles and the practices which threatened everything holiest in their faith, everything dearest in their liberty. But it was soon found to be a more menacing peril than any which it was designed to avert. The liberty of the Christians had been given them as the means of union, of the union which their faith enjoined. But they were divided, isolated, and more than ever. The lines of separation between them and the Heathen were widened. Those amongst themselves were widened likewise. Antagonism was working fearfully against union.

It was time for liberality to revive. Unless it did, the object of Christian liberty would be abandoned, the exercise of Christian liberty would be suspended. There could be no alternative. The hope of free-

dom, the hope of the union to which freedom would lead, depended upon the course of the Christian leaders. The party of antagonism had not so entirely triumphed that there was no other party. A milder spirit was already finding expression. It was amongst the party of what may be truly called liberality.

Of this party there were some to act upon merely general grounds. Minucius Felix, a Roman pleader who had been converted, wrote to refute the accusations still brought against the Christians.[1] He did this with singular moderation. Insisting on the right of man to inquire into things divine,[2] he impressed upon those who claimed the right the necessity of endurance rather than of strife.[3] It was but one point to make. Yet to establish that one was to secure the principle upon which the possibility of returning to liberality depended. Others took the lead in urging more particular measures.

There was one leader whose early experiences seemed to prepare him for anything else than the support of liberality. Yet there was that behind these experiences, as there was that above them, which allowed him to become the head of the liberal movement amongst his contemporaries. He was Origen of Alexandria. He was born of Christian parents near the close of the second century. At the age of sixteen, he beheld his father dragged away by the persecutors. Boy though he was, Origen would have shared the same fate, but for the expostulations of his mother. Her entreaties, however, could not dissuade him from

[1] Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 58.
[2] Octav., 16.
[3] Ib., 37.

writing to his father, then in prison, exhorting him to meet death with fortitude. "Beware," he wrote, "lest thou falter on our account."[4] The father, devotedly trusting in the son, died without fear for those whom he left behind.

Unyielding to the foe without, the young Origen was equally unyielding to the foe within. His stricken family was taken into the house of a lady eminent in rank and fortune. But it was also the refuge of a Heretic. With him Origen engaged in an altercation resulting in the resolution of the boy to provide for himself rather than be provided for at the hazard of his faith.[5]

Yet this determined spirit was destined to do more than any other in recalling the Catholic Christians to liberality. His nature, as generous as it was ardent, gave him the power. The influences quickening this generosity gave him the will. Origen became the advocate of liberality towards both the Heretic and the Heathen.

By being trained a Christian from his infancy, Origen was saved from the reaction which rendered many a convert violent against his former persuasions. Carefully educated by his father, Origen had been led from the Scriptures to the various works of Heathen, especially of Grecian literature. He had more lately studied under Clement, who, as has been observed, was fond of decking the principles of Christianity with dogmas and illustrations derived from

[4] Ap. Eus., VI. 2.

[5] "Magnus vir ab infantia!" exclaims Jerome. Ep. 41.

the lore of Heathenism.[6] But Origen was inclined to make a much more generous use of Heathen materials. In his opinion the old systems contained much that was valuable in itself, much more that was valuable in connection with the new system. All that he drew from Heathenism, was drawn rather with reverence for what was good rather than with denunciation of what was evil in the past.

The liberal tendencies of Origen soon displayed themselves. In the absence of all other Christian teachers, the youth of sixteen undertook to defend the religion of which the votaries were suffering contumely and death. Some Heathen came to hear him, "wishing," as he generously says, "to hear the word of God." Such was his tone, as he brought out the harmony between their associations and the principles which he was defending, that they yielded. One of them lived to be a Bishop. Another became a martyr.[7]

Before his nineteenth year, Origen was appointed teacher of the school in which he had been Clement's pupil. Every purpose within him was quickened in the place to which he was thus promoted. Memories of earnest resistance to the adversaries of his religion made him long to become its defender. But the echoes of strife were equally persuasive in animating him to achieve the peace without which he was just beginning to perceive that his religion could not be defended.

Yet it was a time of war rather than of peace

[6] Eus., VI. 6. [7] Id., VI. 3.

with Origen. Out of doors, rang the shouts of the Heathen pursuers. In doors, rose the wailings of the Christians. The youthful teacher sustained the fortitude of his brethren. He confronted the cruelty of their enemies. The Heathen saw him present at every trial, at every execution. They set a watch about the house in which he resided. But he still came forth, and to him others still repaired. It was at this crisis that he disposed of all the Heathen works collected in former years. "He would no more," says the marvelling historian, "be in need of aid from any man." His pupils saw him pursuing the severest austerities. He went without shoes, "in cold and nakedness." When too much exhausted to continue his toils, he eat no other food than was indispensable to preserve existence. The ground served him for a bed during the few hours which he allowed himself for rest.[8] The liberality which he professed was far from rendering him inert or pusillanimous. It strengthened him in the hour of danger as much as it softened him in the hour of safety.

Much greater danger than had as yet arrived was at hand. It had already appeared that the passion of Christian against Christian was far more violent than any excited in the Heathen. This was again proved in the case of Origen. Clement returned with the principles of antagonism against both the inferior and the superior order, as he would have phrased it, of his converts. He at once encountered

[8] Eus., VI. 3, 8. The martyrs amongst his disciples are mentioned by the same historian. VI. 4, 5.

the liberality of Origen. The younger teacher had no idea that the truth was beyond the reach of any who sought it earnestly. Those who aspired he encouraged, those who slumbered he aroused to the pursuit of Christian knowledge. Whatever else he denied his pupils, he never asked them to surrender their pursuit of all that was loftiest and serenest in their religion. Nor did he ever set up himself or any of his disciples as superiors to the rest. With so different views, it was inevitable that Origen must come into collision with Clement or any other leader of the same opinions. Probably, the advocates of antagonism had found it hard enough to bear with the liberality of Origen towards the Heathen. That which he showed towards the Christians seemed wholly unbearable.

Demetrius was then Bishop of Alexandria. By him Origen had been appointed to the Christian school as a useful instrument in maintaining the dignity not only of the school, but of the entire community. As soon, however, as he appeared in opposition to the older teachers with whom Demetrius was associated, he would unavoidably incur the displeasure of the Bishop. Partly, as it appears, in consequence of the difficulties arising in Alexandria, Origen set out upon repeated journeys[9] in which he spent several years. It was not until he went to Cæsarea in Palestine that the breach between him and the Bishop of Alexandria became too

[9] One to Rome, Eus., VI. 15; another to Arabia Petrea, Id., VI. 19.

wide to be concealed. Demetrius rested the charges which he made against his former teacher upon the fact that Origen, although not yet ordained, had expounded the Scriptures at Cæsarea. But to this the Bishops of Jerusalem and Cæsarea wrote back that they had authorized Origen to address the people by virtue of various precedents which they enumerated to their Alexandrian colleague.[10] Rather than wage a controversy, Origen returned to his labors at Alexandria.

Not long afterwards he again departed. The ostensible object of the present journey was to check the increase of the Heretical party in the Grecian province. But his steps were first directed to Cæsarea, where he received the rite of ordination from the hands of his former friends the Bishops of Cæsarea and Jerusalem, assisted by several of their colleagues.[11] He was then about forty-five years of age. During the quarter of a century that he survived, Origen upheld the same principles to which he had devoted his prime.

On his return from his Grecian journey, he found himself deep in strife at Alexandria. Incensed by his recent proceedings, Demetrius called a council of the superior and inferior clergy in the Egyptian province. To this body the Bishop proposed the deposition of Origen from the office which he had held in the Alexandrian school for nearly thirty years. The Council instantly voted his deposition, adding a sentence of banishment from Alexandria.

[10] Eus., VI. 14, 19.

[11] Id., VI. 8, 23.

Always desirous of employing his powers in better ways than those of altercation, Origen withdrew at once to Palestine.[12] There he was cordially welcomed, especially by Alexander the Bishop of Jerusalem, his companion in youth and his supporter through life. At this Demetrius lost all restraint over his passions. Convening a second council at Alexandria, he procured a sentence declaring Origen to have forfeited the sacred office with which he had been invested by his patrons in Palestine. The rage of the Alexandrian prelate went so far that he excommunicated Origen. Still more singular does it seem to read that the sentence was confirmed by many of the Bishops to whom it was despatched by the angry Demetrius.[13] Nor was it ever annulled.

Thus assailed on one side, Origen was peculiarly honored on another. At the same time that his liberality provoked foes amongst the Christians, it seems to have excited friends amongst the Heathen. No Christian had ever before received so many marks of consideration from his rulers. The Governor of Arabia sent to request a visit from Origen.[14] Mamæa, the mother of the Emperor Alexander Severus, sought an interview with him at Antioch.[15] Years later, Origen writes in his own name to the Emperor and Empress then upon the throne.[16] Yet with all this consideration from those who could

[12] Photius, Bibl., CXVIII. p. 298, ed. Hœschel. et Schott. The authorities of Photius were Pamphilus and Eusebius.

[13] Phot., as above. Hier., Ep. 29 ad Paul. See Origen's own language, In Joann., tom. VI. 1, Op., tom. IV. p. 101, and the treatise of Huet, Origeniana, lib. 1 2. 12 *et seq.*

[14] Eus., VI. 19.

[15] Id., VI. 21.

[16] Philip and Severa, Id., VI. 36.

never have known how much he deserved, Origen never gave way to the influence of worldly honors. "The kings of the earth," he says, "came together, the Senate, the people and the sovereigns of Rome, in order to destroy the name of Jesus. . . . . But as they could do nothing against Him, so will the princes and the powers of the present age be unable to prevent the race of Christians from spreading wider and more abundantly."[17] Not the less acrimonious were the slurs of his Christian opponents. One of the most bitter of the number declared Origen to be "puffed up with the praises of sovereigns."[18]

Meanwhile Origen clung to his liberality. "I had given myself up," he writes, "to the Scriptures, and reports of my proficiency were spread abroad. But as there were sometimes Heretics, and sometimes Heathen scholars or philosophers, amongst my visitors, I thought it best to examine both the dogmas of the Heretics and the declarations of the philosophers."[19] "There are many," says the teacher, "who have embraced Christianity unwillingly. A sort of impulse hath turned them suddenly from hating the truth into an excessive devotion towards it."[20] It was to imbue the Heretic and the Heathen with a higher knowledge that he used their lower learning. "Human wisdom," he averred, "may be the means, if Divine wisdom is made the end."[21]

[17] In Lib. Jes. Nav., Hom. IX.

[18] Theophilus of Alexandria. Pasch. Lib., II., ap. Hier., Op., tom. IV. pars II. p. 711.

[19] Ap. Eus., VI. 19.

[20] Cont. Cels., I. 46.

[21] Ib., VI. 13. So in the same treatise, III. 49: — "To be truly learned is no evil. Nay, learning is a road to virtue. . . . . Nor would any one deny that it is good to make use of the best doctrines. But what shall we call the best besides those which are true and

"I would have thee exert all thy powers," wrote Origen to his disciple Gregory, "in the cause of Christianity. With this aim, I would see thee obtain from the philosophy of the Greeks all that can be connected with Christian truth. Just as thou shouldst seek in geometry or astronomy whatever may be of use in the interpretation of the sacred writings. . . . . First, then, do thou attend to the perusal of the Holy Scriptures. But really attend! For we who read what is Divine have need of great attention, lest we say or think any thing incautiously. . . . . And attending to this Divine subject, do thou seek with righteousness and with faith that which is hidden from many, namely, the spirit of the Holy Writings. Nor let it seem enough to knock or to ask. Most necessary of all things in understanding what is Divine, is prayer. The which commending, the Saviour said not only 'Knock and it shall be opened unto you,' 'Seek and ye shall find,' but also this, 'Pray and it shall be given unto you.'" [22]

The liberality of Origen was most conspicuous in relation to the Heretics. Seldom were these treated liberally by their Catholic adversaries. It was usual to denounce them with the intention of humbling them. Of this the effect had been but to increase the distance between them and the Catholic Christians. Origen took a different course. He showed his desire not to lay them low, but to raise them up. He proved his ability to reason with them as well as to rebuke

which lead to virtue? . . . . Such things do not hinder one in knowing God; they rather assist him."

[22] Op., tom. I. pp. 30, 32. Jerome (Ep. 83) describes the manner in which Origen carried out his own recommendations.

them. Possessing himself of their positions, he met them with arguments of far greater efficacy than could be brought against them by such as were ignorant of their various views. A certain Ambrose, belonging to the party of the Gnostic Valentinus, was so entirely won over to the faith of Origen, as to become one of his stanchest supporters.[23] A Bishop of Bostra in Arabia, having expressed a new opinion concerning the divinity of Christ, was called before a council of his colleagues. But not until Origen, who was present, took part in the debates of the assembly, was the Arabian prelate persuaded to abjure his doctrines.[24] So when another heresy had been adopted amongst the Arabian converts, it was Origen who conducted the trial of the Heretics and procured their recantation before a council.[25]

The reform which others would have wrought with severe measures, was more mildly urged by Origen. "God is long suffering," wrote the Alexandrian. "He awaits the penitence of every man."[26] "We ought the more," pursues Origen, "to beseech His mercy."[27] Whatever were his visions,[28] he saw one thing clearly. Whatever were his allegories, he taught one thing plainly. This was the justice of God towards all men. "It is revealed," he said, "in the Evangel, and by this, that no one is excluded

[23] Eus., VI. 18.

[24] Id., VI. 33.

[25] Eus., VI. 36. See his mild description of the Heretical sects, In Ep. ad Tit., Frag., tom. IV. p. 695; or his generous remarks, In Matt., X. 23, Op., tom. III. p. 474.

[26] In Ep. ad Rom., lib. II. 3, Op., tom. IV. p. 477.

[27] In Luc., Hom. XXXVIII. Op., tom. III. p. 977.

[28] He sees nothing blamable or contemptible even in magic. Cont. Cels., I. 24. Vincent of Lerina, pronouncing a glowing eulogy upon Origen, laments his errors. Common., 23.

from salvation."[29] "And if," he argued, "the truth is one and the same, then the comprehension and the exposition of it are one and the same."[30] Origen taught the common people as no other Christian of the time appears to have done.[31] "He desireth," he wrote of St. Paul, "and he ceaseth not from praying that he may gather fruit from the Romans as from other races. . . . . He gathers from the Greeks. He gathers from the Barbarians. He gathers from the wise. He gathers from the unwise."[32] The description applies to him who wrote it. The liberal teacher was the popular one. He was also the successful one. On all whom he instructed their obligations were impressed in such a manner as to ensure the reform which others attempted to bring about by harsher means.

The sterner element, as we have read, was not wanting in Origen. "He who shall not have refused tribulation upon tribulation," writes the Alexandrian, exhorting his friend Ambrose to martyrdom, "but who shall have endured tribulation like a noble athlete, he likewise receiveth hope upon hope. . . . . What, then, can be more welcome, than when, on account of our devotion in Christ towards God, we are led away under arrest, yet triumphant rather than triumphed over. . . . . For it is right," he exclaims, "that death by martyrdom should be called exaltation. Let us glorify God, exalting Him in dying, as the martyr can do by his death!"[33] The same spirit

[29] "Justitia enim Dei in Evangelio revelatur per id quod a salute nullus excipiatur." In Ep. ad Rom., lib. I. 15., Op., tom. IV. p. 471.

[30] In Joann., tom. II. 4, Op., tom. IV. p. 54.

[31] Eus., VI. 18.

[32] In Ep. ad Rom., lib. I. 14, Op., tom. IV. p. 470.

[33] Exhort. ad Mart., 1, 42, 50. So Cont. Cels., VIII. 44.

breathed in resistance to the oppressors who rose amongst the Christians. Assailed on all sides, charged with heresy and bigotry, with undue submission and undue independence, Origen defended himself with resolute determination.

Amidst all his conflicts, Origen found time for peaceful exertion. After residing for several years at Cæsarea, he began his work of editing and commenting on the Scriptures. Two editions, containing divers copies and versions of the Old Testament, were prepared, notwithstanding the multiplicity of other interests crowding his later years. Copious commentaries upon all parts of the Christian writings, together with various defences and expositions of Christian principles, still bear witness to the industry and the versatility of this remarkable man.[34] His strenuousness might well earn for him the name of the Adamantine.[35] He did not labor without encouragement or sympathy. His friend Ambrose not only urged him to prosecute his Scriptural studies, but supplied him with the means of publishing their voluminous results.[36] Another friend, the lady Juliana of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, provided him with a home and a library during a period of persecution.[37] Returning from Cappadocia to Palestine, he there remained, approaching the close of his life through continued toils and continued controversies.

The last years were embittered by the reviving

[34] On his works see Eus., VI. 16, 23, 24, 25, 31, 32, 36; Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 54 and Ep. 29.

[35] Eus., VI. 14.

[36] Id., VI. 23. Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 56.

[37] Pallad., Hist. Laus., 147, cited by Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. III. p. 542. Eus., VI. 17.

passions of his contemporaries. Never had the Heathen been more violent against the Christians.[38] Never had the Christians appeared to be more estranged from one another. At the age of threescore and ten, Origen died at Tyre.[39] "My lord and brother," exclaimed Alexander, Bishop of Jerusalem, "whom I have known to be most excellent in all things!"[40] "For long years," says Pamphilus, the defender of Origen, "the master of the Church!"[41]

What had he done? He had pleaded for liberality against antagonism. So pleading, he had pleaded for the liberty of the Christians. He had urged them to the exercise of their noblest powers. He had roused them to the use of all their powers. Their right to liberty was thus revived. At the same time he had restored the tenure upon which liberty was held by asserting the law of love. In directing his fellow-believers to regain their liberty, Origen had led them to renew their union.

The tendency to liberality was not confined to the Christian leaders. Among the contemporaries of Origen were various teachers passing for representatives of the Heathen schools. Yet of them all, not one was a strict adherent to the doctrines which he professed. Alexander of Aphrodisias in Caria maintained the unity of the Aristotelian system against the innovations of subsequent philosophers by whom it had been divided or augmented. But

[38] On Origen's sufferings, see Eus., VI. 39.

[39] 253 or 254. Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 54.

[40] Ap. Eus., VI. 14.

[41] Apol. pro Orig., Præf., ap. Orig., Op., tom. IV. App. p. 19. See the panegyric of Origen's pupil Gregory Thamaturgus, Orig., Op., tom. IV. App. pp. 56 *et seq.*

Alexander imitated the very proceedings which he would have condemned. With glimpses of a wider prospect than had opened to his master, the Carian brought forth Aristotle's views as though they had been hoodwinked falcons to be loosed upon a loftier range than they had ever found of old.[42] Sextus Empiricus belonged to the Sceptical school. But instead of allowing scepticism to do its usual work of destruction, Sextus declared against the errors of his fellow-philosophers. The farther one could remove himself, he affirmed, from the forms of reasoning, the nearer would he approach to the forms of truth.[43] The difference between such a Sceptic and his gloomier forerunners, as well as that between Alexander of Aphrodisias and his severer predecessors, must be ascribed to the liberality by which the Heathen and the Christian were beginning to be reconciled.

The more ideal and the more hopeful schools were led still nearer to the Christians. A line of philosophers, renowned above all others of their time, began at Alexandria while Origen was still laboring there. The fusion of the ancient doctrines into a single body of philosophy had long been the aim of the Alexandrian inquirers. But it was reserved for the later Platonicians to make an effort that should distance all earlier exertions towards the same end. Although the object in view was to compose a sys-

[42] As in his views upon the nature and the providence of the Deity. See citations from Alexander's commentaries in Ritter's Hist. Anc. Phil., Book XII. ch. IV.

[43] Especially in his treatise Adv. Mathematicos, I. 50 *et seq.*, and the conclusion of the treatise. See Ritter also, as above.

tem that could be matched against the Christian faith, the workings of Christianity amongst its adversaries had never been more apparent than in the higher tone assumed by the teachers of the new philosophy.

An early member of the school is to be found in Numenius, by birth a Syrian. He essayed to restore the doctrines of Plato to the position from which they had been displaced by commentaries and interfusions. Profoundly versed in other systems, as well in those of Persia and India as in those of Judea and ancient Egypt, Numenius undertook to blend them with the Platonic philosophy.[44] In this enterprise he found not only admirers, but imitators and successors. Ammonius Saccas of Alexandria took up the work,[45] leaving it, in his turn, to a train of pupils, under whose management and that of their scholars it attained to its greatest development.

Plotinus, a native of Egypt, who deserves the name of Platonician more truly than any preceding leader of the school, carried to Rome[46] the principles that had hitherto been taught exclusively at Alexandria. He climbed to the height of the system, where echoes of Christian truth seemed clearer than those of Heathen doctrine. "An undecaying Intellect," he would say, "an immense Wisdom presides over this intel-

[44] "Ætas incerta est. Nominatur primum a Clemente Alexandrino." Ritter et Preller, Hist. Phil. Gr. Rom., § 501. See some extracts from Numenius (ap. Eus., Præp. Ev., IX. 7, XI. 10, 18, 22,) touching upon his exposition of the harmony between other systems, and the Platonician.

[45] He died in 243 at a great age. He attempted to bring out the doctrines of Aristotle as well as those of Plato. Photius, cited by Ritter, Hist. Anc. Phil., Book XIII. ch. 1. See Eus., VI. 19.

[46] About the year 245. Porphyr., Vit. Plot., 3.

ligible world."[47] Then he would lose himself in ecstasy. "A life which is in reality under Saturn flourishes there; Saturn being a god and pure intellect."[48] "We must confess," he cries, "that some of the ancient and blessed philosophers discovered the truth."[49] From them he would revert to his master Plato, in whom he found still more numerous instances of successful meditation. Porphyry, the disciple of Plotinus, travelled in the Western and Southern provinces; while his pupil Jamblichus taught in his native Syria.[50] Through their means the Platonician philosophy became the prevailing philosophy of the Empire. As such, it was so opposed to Christianity that the severest enemies of the Church were those who rested their hostility upon the later Platonism. Yet at no time did they cease to borrow professions from the religion which they combated as if they were incensed at being beneath its spell.[51]

A more singular indication of the wider circles in which the Christian faith was acting may be seen in the history, imperfect though it be, of the Persian Manes. He is usually described as a convert who would have combined the ideas in which he had

[47] See his Ennead., v. 1, 2, on the universal life of the world, ib. 4, on providence, ib. 6, on prayer. Such citations might be multiplied.

[48] From Taylor's select works of Plotinus, p. 262.

[49] Plot., Ennead., III. 7. 1.

[50] Porphyry lived until after the beginning of the third century. Jamblichus survived him about twenty-five years. The latter developed the Pythagorean tendencies of the school, but both were inclined to the wildest mysticisms. See Ritter et Preller, Hist. Phil. Gr. Rom., § 521 *et seq.*

[51] See a letter of Porphyry to his wife Marcella, in Mai's Collection, Class. Auct., tom. IV. pp. 356 *et seq.*; especially Capp. 6, 11 *et seq.* Porphyry was the most bitter adversary of Christianity. Lardner, Test. Anc. Heathen, ch. XXXVII.

been educated as a Persian with those which he obtained concerning Christianity. The ancient doctrine concerning the two great powers, the one of Light and of Goodness, the other of Darkness and of Evil, was thus connected with the advent of Christ.[52] He came, according to Manes, to acquaint mankind with their Good Deity and to overcome their Evil Deity, at the same time that the Good Deity was declared to be the only Supreme Being.[53] Manes was far from making the Christian element subordinate to the Persian in the system which he had conceived. On the contrary, he assumed his mission amongst men altogether as a Christian, or in his own words, as "an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the Providence of God the Father."[54] With faith so recreant in Persian eyes, Manes was first persecuted and then slain by successive orders from his sovereigns.[55] He left a greater number of disciples within the Roman than within the Persian territories. But they were rejected as Heretics by the large majority of Christians in the Empire.[56]

The world of action moves according to the world

[52] See Archel. et Manetis Disp., ap. Routh, Reliq. Sac., tom. v., especially pp. 43 *et seq.*, and Beausobre, Hist. Crit. de Manichée, Hist. des Dogmes, lib. I. ch. I.

[53] Epiphan., Adv. Hær., lib. II. tom. II., LXVI. 14.

[54] "Manichæus Apostolus Jesu Christi providentia Dei Patris." Ap. August., Cont. Ep. Man., 5. So in the Disp., as above, 5 *et seq.*, 13.

[55] He is said to have begun his mission about 270, and to have been put to death sometime within the next ten years. Socrates, Hist. Eccl., I. 22. See Herbelot, Bibliot. Orient., s. v. Mani, p. 549, ed. 1697, or Beausobre, Hist. Crit. de Man., tom. I. p. 208, ed. 1734.

[56] Manes had not been considerate in his treatment of them. Γαλιλαῖοι, "Galileans," is the epithet which he uses in describing the Catholic Christians. Ep., cited by Gieseler, Man. Eccl. Hist., § 61, note 9.

of speculation. The movements which may bear the names of Manes, of the Platonicians, above all, of Origen, were too various and too wide to be limited by any sphere of mere contemplation. The liberality advocated by the great Alexandrian would achieve its work. The liberty of the Christians could not but find its proper exercise. The union which they were called to prepare could not but find its proper preparation.

CHAPTER VIII.

ORGANIZATION.

"Unde nobis exemplum datum est veteris hominis viam fugere."

CYPRIAN., *De Unit. Eccl.*, p. 194.

"Quando habeat omnis Episcopus pro licentia libertatis et potestatis suæ arbitrium proprium."

ID., *Ap. Conc. Carthag.*, p. 330, ed. Baluze.

THE soldiery still ruled. It was still divided. Peace, much more concordance, was impossible amongst men rising from the places of peasants, townsmen or even nobles to those of the dominant soldiers.[1] The magistrates and the Senators of Rome were formally prohibited from entering or even visiting the legions.[2] But German horsemen, Moorish spearmen, and Eastern archers were enlisted indiscriminately.[3] The more lasting, the more commanding the sway of the soldiery, the more tumultuous would be its divisions.[4]

[1] See lists of the rewards heaped upon the rising officer. Vopisc., Prob., 4, 5. Trebell. Poll., Claud., 14 *et seq.*, 17.

[2] Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIII. 33.

[3] As in the rolls of Maximin's army, Hero., VIII. 1. Under Valerian, the enumeration of the troops begins with "Sagittarios Ityreos, Armenios, Arabas, Saracenos, Mesopotamios, etc." Vopisc., Aur., 11.

[4] "Tanto peggiora più quanto più invetera" SANAZZARO.

The point at which these divisions appeared most turbulent was the imperial throne. From the murder of Alexander Severus to that of Gallienus, thirty-three years later,[5] fifteen sovereigns were successively made and unmade by the ruling armies. First upon the list was Maximinus, who reigned three years at the head of his troops until they slew him as he was approaching Rome.[6] A father and son, named Gordianus, had already risen and fallen in Africa.[7] The son of the younger Gordian was then associated with Maximus and Balbus, two Senators whom their colleagues had ventured to set up against Maximin. On their murder, the young Gordian became sole Emperor.[8] He was put to death five years afterwards at the machination of Philippus, whom the Eastern army proclaimed.[9] Philip retained his title for the next five years, associating his son with him during the latter part of the time. Both were slain by their troops.[10] Decius, the general leading the insurrection against the Philips, had reigned but two years when he fell in battle with Gothic invaders in the north.[11] His son Hostilianus was declared his successor, or rather the colleague to his successor, Gallus. The son of Decius soon perished, leaving the throne to Gallus and his son Volusianus. Both these were murdered by their legions at the expiration of two years.[12] Æmilianus had been previously pro-

[5] 235–268.

[6] 238. Hero., VIII. 5. Capit., Max. Duo, 23.

[7] Hero., VII. 9, 10. Capit., Max. et Balb., 2.

[8] Id., ib., 14. Hero., VIII. 8.

[9] 244. Capit., Gord. Tres, 31.

[10] 249. Eutr., IX. 3. Zosimus (I. 22) says that they were slain in battle.

[11] 251. Zos., I. 23. Jornandes, De Reb. Get., 18.

[12] 253. Zos., I. 28.

claimed by the army in Mæsia.[13] He, too, was assassinated, while another general, Valerianus, was invested with the perilous purple. After reigning six or seven years, Valerian died in captivity amongst the Persians. Gallienus, his son, survived eight years more, when he fell by the swords of his troops.[14] Such a scroll of slaughter[15] tells not only the helplessness of the sovereigns, but the hostilities amongst their soldiery.

The effect appeared upon the frontier. In the East there had arisen a new foe. After nearly five centuries of dominion, the line of Parthian monarchs was cut off by the Persian race under the guidance of Ardisheer, the founder of the long dynasty of the Sassanidæ.[16] The new king instantly preferred his demands to all the territories formerly under the Persian sway, but now under the Roman. A war followed.[17] This was during the reign of Alexander Severus. Ten years afterwards, Ardisheer's son, Shaypoor, renewed the conflict.[18] The successes of the Emperor Gordian's legions did not prevent the Persian monarch from penetrating far within the Roman boundaries. A little later, Valerian the Emperor was taken captive. His son owed the protection of the Eastern provinces to the arms of Oden-

[13] Zos., I. 29. Eutr., IX. 5.

[14] 268. Treb. Poll., Gall. Duo, 14. Zos., I. 40.

[15] "The scroll . . . .
With slaughter coupled to the name of kings."
King John.

[16] 226. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXX. 3, 4.

[17] 231, 232. Hero., VI. 2, 4. Eckhel, Doct. Num. Vet., tom. VI. p. 276.

[18] Ardisheer died in 240. His parting instructions to his son are given in Malcolm's Hist. of Persia, vol. I. p. 95. The war under Shaypoor, or Sapor, broke out in 242. Eutr., IX. 2. Zos., I. 18 *et seq.*

athus the Palmyrene, who was declared a colleague by Gallienus.[19] On the death of Odenathus, his spouse, the Queen Zenobia, held the Eastern realms of the Empire. The legions seemed as unable to compete with her as with the Persian beyond.

They appeared still more incapable upon the Northern border. Of the names attached to the invaders of the period, the chief were those of the Franks,[20] the Alemanni or Germans,[21] and the Goths, the two former appellations being applied to the tribes breaking in over the Rhine and the upper Danube, while the name of Goths was given to those who crossed the Danube at a lower point. The Goths fell upon Thrace, Greece, and the opposite shores of Asia Minor. The Germans carried carnage into Italy. The Franks dashed over Gaul to Spain and across the sea to Africa.[22] The progress of the invaders in the North and West, like that of the enemy in the East, was stayed, where stayed at all, by other forces than the imperial. In these, or in their leaders, as in Odenathus and Zenobia, the Roman realms found sometimes defenders, always rulers. Thirty tyrants, so called, are enumerated by the imperial biographer as rising under Gallienus.[23] The Em-

[19] "Sub Gallieno Mesopotamia invasa, etiam Syriam sibi Persæ cæperunt vindicare, nisi, quod turpe dictu est, Odenathus, decurio Palmyrenus, collecta Syrorum agrestium manu, acriter restitisset." Sext. Ruf., Brev., 23.

[20] First mentioned under Gordian. Vop., Aur., 7. Also under Gallienus. Treb. Poll., Gall. Duo, 7.

[21] First mentioned under Caracalla. Dion Cass., ap. Xiph., LXXVII. 13. Spart., Carac., 10.

[22] Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIII. 3. Eutr., IX. 6, 7. Oros., VII. 22.

The best account of these invasions is to be found in Luden's History, book IV. ch. 3 to 5.

[23] Treb. Poll., Triginta Tyranni. See Gibbon, ch. IX., at the end. Amongst the "thirty" was the Gallic lady, Victorina, who, though

peror himself despaired of retaining anything besides Italy.[24]

The effect of the divisions amongst the soldiery appeared still more strikingly within the frontier. Flushed by defeat still more than by victory, the legions were wreaking outrage upon the subjects whom they could not defend against their foreign foes. "What good is there," asks the Heathen historian, "in slaying the barbarians, while Rome and the whole Empire are filled with more numerous murders?"[25] "And when we had obtained," exclaims the Christian Bishop, "a respite from other evils, war and famine followed. And now we are all in tears, and lamentations resound through the streets, in consequence of the numbers of the dead and the dying."[26] In vain was the thousandth anniversary of Rome's foundation celebrated by the Emperor Philip.[27] In vain would the Emperor Decius have revived the ancient censorship as a restorative of order to his distracted realms.[28] Not merely was the handwriting upon the wall. The wall itself was falling beneath the blows of those who held as well as of those who assailed it. The ruin of the imperial centralization drew nearer.[29]

refusing the title of Empress, bore that of Mater Castrorum. Poll., as above, v. xxx.

[24] Treb. Poll., Gall. Duo, 6. The biographer gives a different turn to the imperial lamentations.

[25] Hero., vii. 3.

[26] Dion. Alex., ap. Eus., vii. 22. See Cyprian., Ad Dem., p. 219, and De Mort., pp. 229, 233.

"Todo es desdichas, y tragedias todo,
Tanta es la ruina de tu imperio."
CALDERON.

[27] In the year 248. Eckhel, Doct. Num. Vet., tom. vii. pp. 323 *et seq.*

[28] Valerian, afterwards Emperor, was Censor. Treb. Poll., Val., 1, 2.

[29] "Di si gran moti il fine
Non fabbriche di regni ma ruine."
TASSO.

All this, and more than this, the Christians saw. "Fancy yourself," writes Cyprian of Carthage, "fancy yourself a little while on the summit of a lofty mountain, whence you are looking down upon the things beneath you. . . . . Behold the roads held by robbers, the seas by pirates, the conflicts of troops everywhere divided! The earth drips with blood. The murders, regarded as crimes when committed by individuals, are called virtues when done by public bodies. . . . . If you turn your face to the cities, you will find their greatness more melancholy than any solitude. The gladiatorial game is celebrated that the sight of blood may satisfy the lusts of cruel eyes. . . . . What can be spoken of that is more inhuman, more terrible? . . . . Hence turn to the no less shameful wrongs of another spectacle. In the theatres also you will see what must prove both a grief and a shame to you. Tragedy reproduces all the ancient vices, ... as if to prevent the passing generations from forgetting any sin that has ever been perpetrated. . . . . But if from the height whereon you stand, you are able to look into secret places, ... you will see what it will be a crime to have even seen. . . . . Perchance after all these dangerous ways, these various and multiplied battles, these sanguinary and disgraceful exhibitions, these vile debaucheries in public and in private, perchance the Forum may seem to be unpolluted. Thither cast your eyes. You will there find still more to abhor, still more to shrink from witnessing. Though the laws are upon their twelve tables, though they stand openly engraved, amongst the laws themselves

vice breaks forth. Nor has innocence any defence amongst them. The fury of the combatants increases. As though it were mad, the Forum resounds with the strife interrupting peace even amid those who wear the toga. There the spear, the sword and the executioner are all at hand. . . . . The laws themselves have consented to transgressions. . . . . And think you those secure whom armed guards surround in the splendor of their royal halls? They have greater apprehensions than any."[30]

Such was the disorganization of the imperial institutions. It excited the Christians to organize their own institutions. Without a more definite organization than they had yet formed, they might not be able to sustain themselves as Christians. Without it, they could not support themselves as subjects of the Empire.

A still stronger impulse to organization came from the trials which the Christians were still encountering. Though they met in retirement, though they buried themselves in the shades of the cemetery[31] or the catacomb,[32] they were hurried into the publicity and the glare of the judgment-halls or the amphitheatres occupied by their persecutors. The edicts of earlier reigns[33] against them were always in force and frequently in exercise. Maximin the Emperor ordered the Christian clergy to be put to

[30] Cyp., Ep. I. pp. 4, 5, 6.

[31] Conc. Elib., c. 34, 35, ap. Routh, Reliq. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 255, 256.

[32] "Sepulta hic Roma est . . . . Sub Roma Romam quærito"— is an inscription given by Aringhus, Roma Subterranea, tom. I. pp. 625, 6, ed. 1651.

[33] Which a jurist of the time is described as having collected, "ut doceret quibus pœnis affici oporteret eos qui se cultores Dei profiterentur." Lact., Div. Inst., v. 11.

death and the places of their assemblies to be destroyed.[34] Decius was still more violent.[35] The assaults commanded by him or by his soldiers were the most terrible that had ever been made upon the Christians.[36] Gallus, the succeeding sovereign, was not so hostile. Neither was Valerian who reigned afterwards. Yet both allowed their Christian subjects to be pursued and slain.[37] An edict of Gallienus permits the return of the Christians to their cemeteries.[38] They were considered as belonging to the dead even when the persecution ceased.

The Christians were in part already organized. The directions of the Saviour and of His Apostles had been fulfilled in the establishment of the Catholic Church. In this, as we have seen, the Christians were united. In this, as we have seen, the tendencies to antagonism were met by those to liberality. Nor had the union of the Catholics been lost, notwithstanding their separation from many of their fellow-Christians, from many, even, of their fellow-Catholics. So far the organization of the Christians was secure.

Yet it was incomplete. The Catholics were united. But the distinctions that must always exist in any body, large or small, existed amongst them. They had their rulers, they had their subjects. It was not according to Heathen rules that these were distinguished. An enumeration of the Catholics at Rome

[34] Eus., VI. 28. Origen., In Matt. Ser., tom. III. p. 857.

[35] "Execrabile animal!" cries the writer De Mort. Pers., 4.

[36] Dion. Alex., ap. Eus., VI. 40–42, 44. Cyp., De Lapsis.

[37] Cyp., Ep. 82. Dion. Alex., ap. Eus., VII. 1, 10, 11.

[38] Eus., VII. 13.

begins with the clergy. Next to them are mentioned "the widows with the poor above fifteen hundred in number." Not until after these, are "the opulent" and "the innumerable body of the people" admitted on the lists.[39] In all this, there is no allusion to the common distinctions of society. The subjects appear as the mass of believers, whether rich or poor, low or high, free or slave. The rulers appear as a band, chosen indeed, yet indiscriminately from free or slave, low or high, rich or poor.

But there was a chief amongst the rulers, still more exalted, therefore, amongst the subjects, on whose authority at the present time the organization of the Christians depended. The relations of the subjects amongst themselves, those of the rulers amongst themselves, those of the subjects to the rulers, would all harmonize with the position assigned to the Christian Bishop.

What was to be his place in his own community? That was the first and great question. Generally, though not necessarily taken from the Presbyters, he was by them nominated to a council composed both of clergy and of laymen.[40] Once confirmed by this body, he held his appointment for life, "presiding over his people," says the ancient work, "with the power which he hath received from God in regard to the clergy and to all the people."[41] The episcopal power assumed different proportions according to the different communities in which it

[39] Cornelius, ap. Eus., VI. 43.

[40] "Sub populi assistentis conscientia." Cyp., Ep. 18.

[41] Apostolic Constitutions, II. 26.

existed. Here it was but a nominal supervision. There it was an actual dominion. In one place, the Bishop was "a ruler and a king to whom tribute must be brought as to a sovereign."[42] In another, he was merely a minister of the ministering priesthood. The episcopal authority varied also with the characters of its holders. An ambitious prelate would clothe himself in all the authority which he could obtain. A humble one would lay aside all with which he could part. It was still to be decided how much of a ruler the Bishop should be in his own community.

What was to be his power in relation to other communities besides his own? This was the next great question. It had been one of urgent importance since the claims of the Roman Victor at the close of the second century. None but an aspiring Bishop would assume the control of his colleagues or of their people. But there were many prelates to prove themselves, in this respect as in others, to be aspiring. It was still to be decided how far they would succeed.

Whatever authority the Bishop possessed amongst the Christians, he was still a subject amongst the Heathen. If any distinction between him and his people was observed, it was that he stood before them as their champion, the first to suffer in the event of persecution. He might, it is true, dare to act as well as to suffer, and in time of peace as well as in time of conflict. But he was not the less a subject to the powers that were.

[42] Apostolic Constitutions, II. 34. So III. 11, 19, 20.

"I leave to others," wrote the Christian, "to describe how Babylas the Bishop of Antioch governed his people." The heroism of the prelate towards his sovereign was considered worthier to occupy the attention of posterity. It seems that the Emperor, supposed to be Philip,[43] came to the place where the Christians of Antioch were assembled. He had no wish, apparently, to join in their services. All that he desired was to see what they were doing. But Babylas interfered. "A Heathen priest would have proved himself," says the narrator, "a greater slave of his sovereign than of his gods." Not so with the Christian. He may not have gone so far as to have compelled the sovereign to stand amongst his penitents. Yet the tradition to this effect shows the impression produced upon those witnessing or recalling the scene in which the Bishop compelled the Emperor to withdraw. But the Bishop was still the subject; and Babylas appears to have been at once imprisoned.[44]

Not far from the same time, the bishopric of Carthage was conferred upon a man whose career forms the corner-stone of our present narrative. Thascius, afterwards called Cæcilius, Cyprianus, an eloquent and wealthy rhetorician, had reached middle age when he emerged, according to his biographer's phrase, from the clouds of this world.[45] His reputation, however, was sufficiently brilliant to render

[43] Chrysostom, Lib. de S. Bab. cont. Jul. et Gent., 6. Eus., vi. 34.

[44] Chrys., as above. Babylas was put to death during the persecution under Decius. Eus., vi. 39.

[45] "Mundi nube discussa." Pontius, Vit. et Pass. S. Cæc. Cyp., 2.

his conversion the subject of general congratulation amongst the Catholic Christians. From the first, Cyprian gave proof of the earnestness which continued to distinguish him. All that he possessed was sold in order that the proceeds might be distributed amongst the poor.[46] Within a very short interval, Cyprian was advanced to the office of Presbyter, and then to that of Bishop.[47]

The head of the Carthaginian community was at that period one of the chief prelates amongst the Christians. "My province," says Cyprian, "stretches widely, including even Numidia and Mauretania."[48] Nor was it merely extent of territory that contributed to the dignity of his diocese. Christian as well as Heathen memories centred in Carthage. It was there that Perpetua and Felicitas had died, there that the appeals of Tertullian had been uttered in strenuous devotion. Though dead, Tertullian yet spoke to Cyprian, by whom he was accepted as a master.[49] Alive to all these associations and to the influence with which they invested him, Cyprian soon became conspicuous amongst the Catholic leaders of his time.

He had not, it is said, sought preferment to the bishopric. It is certain, on the other hand, that he did not obtain it without controversy. A number of the Carthaginian clergy, very likely indignant at the elevation of so recent a convert above them, not only opposed the nomination of Cyprian, but denied

[46] Pontius, Vit. et Pass. S. Cæc. Cyp., 2, 6.

[47] At about the age of fifty, therefore about the year 250.

[48] Ep. 45.

[49] Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 53.

the validity of his election. He met his opponents with equal resolution and wisdom. Upbraiding them for their course,[50] he abated nothing of his deference towards the clergy as a body, at the same time that he professed the utmost consideration for his people at large.[51] Yet there was nothing like a want of determination on his part to assert his own authority. On the contrary, the disturbances with which he was surrounded appear to have convinced him of the necessity of establishing his power more securely.[52] The power already in his hands was directed towards reforming the abuses with which his diocese was overrunning. A treatise concerning the Attire of Virgins opens with the recommendation of discipline as "the guardian of hope, the stay of faith, the guide upon the journey of salvation, the aliment and nourishment of a good disposition, and the teacher of virtue." But in the midst of his exertions to reform his people and to secure himself, Cyprian was suddenly interrupted.

The edicts of the Emperor Decius against his Christian subjects excited an extraordinary persecution at Carthage. Large numbers abjured the Christian faith; while still larger numbers fled from the city. According to the common opinion, which regarded the Bishop as the defender of his community, Cyprian should have taken the lead of the few who

[50] "Neque futurum Domini judicium," he says of them, "neque nunc sibi propositum Episcopum cogitantes." Ep. 9. So Pont., Vit. Cyp., 5.

[51] "Quando a primordio episcopatus mei statuerim nihil sine consilio vestro," addressing the clergy, "et sine consensu plebis mea privatim sententia gerere." Ep. 5.

[52] Ep. 61, 62, 66.

remained to encounter violence and death. "We ought," he himself wrote concerning the principal order, "we ought to be both an encouragement and an example to others."[53] Side by side, however, with this opinion, were the convictions of Cyprian respecting the eminence of the Bishop, too exalted a being for the persecutors to destroy or for the persecuted to lose. The repugnance still existing against him on the part of many of the most steadfast clergy may have added wings to Cyprian's resolution. He took the lead not amongst the martyrs, but amongst the fugitives. No step could have more effectually increased the opposition of the discontented Presbyters than the flight of their Bishop from the perils which they themselves were determined to brave. . . . . ,Others, who had hitherto supported Cyprian, now proved his adversaries;[54] while Christians at a distance wrote in amazement to ask the cause of his retreat.[55] From whatever motive he had acted, he had not succeeded in avoiding almost universal obloquy. What was thought of his defence appears from the doubtful manner in which it was received, still more from the sophistical manner in which it was preferred.[56]

Notwithstanding his absence, Cyprian maintained his authority. No interval of any length was allowed to pass without despatches to his clergy or to

[53] "Episcopi . . . . quos et hortamento esse oportet cæteris et exemplo." De Laps., p. 183.

[54] Ep. 69.

[55] Ap. Cyp., Ep. 2.

[56] At first he endeavors to get rid even of the suspicion that he could be harshly judged. Ep. 3. Then follow his letters, Ep. 5, 9–14. "Et quid egerim," he says, (Ep. 14,) "loquuntur vobis epistolæ pro temporibus emissæ numero tredecim."

his people, whose bitterness against him was much augmented by the severity of his directions. Few, he knew, had possessed the means of concealing themselves as he had done, yet no sooner did he hear that the Christians at Carthage were joining hands with some who had lately submitted to their persecutors, than he interfered. The sufferers from the persecution had generally taken the part of the Fallen, or the Sacrificers, as their weaker brethren were called.[57] But Cyprian, declaring against the faithful as well as against the unfaithful, sent his instructions that the Fallen should wait his return.[58]

Such a decree from such a source was sure to be resisted. The Presbyter Novatus, an opponent of Cyprian from the first, now came forward as the leader of all who would take part against the fugitive prelate. Novatus was a man of an independent but ill-regulated character, held in too little repute to be accepted as the chief of any party that could be gathered against Cyprian. The agitation of the Presbyter had therefore produced but little effect when the Bishop suddenly reappeared after an absence of nearly two years.[59] A council which he immediately called espoused his cause against Novatus, who appears to have departed previously in disgrace.[60] It was not long before Cyprian had satisfied the claims of the Fallen, and repelled the charges still brought against him by those who had borne with persecu-

[57] Lapsi, Sacrificati, Thurificati, or Libellatici. See Cyprian's treatise De Lapsis.

[58] Ep. 9 *et seq.*, 22.

[59] "Exilium jam biennii." Ep. 40.

[60] Ep. 49. On the council and its decision, see Ep. 52, 54.

tion. The number of his adherents was probably increased by the return of those who, like himself, had fled. It needed only a judicious mingling of his authority and his eloquence to win over most of the rest. In proportion as his people returned to him, he regained his reputation not only with them, but throughout the neighboring and the distant dioceses. He had been placed in circumstances to try his courage, as a ruler and as a subject. If he had failed as a subject, he had triumphed as a ruler.

Let us do him entire justice. He had not fled, his adherents would say, from want of courage. Far otherwise. It was proving himself courageous to prefer the long trials of life to the rapid agonies of death. Not so courageous, it would be argued, were the martyrs, the confessors. They faced the judge and the executioner. They shrank from the unseen sufferings of exile and of affliction. These were far from being unreasonable arguments. It might be still more reasonably urged that the Bishop, whether right or wrong in avoiding martyrdom, was right in saving his authority from being neglected or violated. Those who had confronted the persecutor were now taking it upon themselves to confront their spiritual ruler. "Let them know," exclaimed Cyprian, "that martyrs do not make the Evangel. It is the Evangel which makes martyrs."[61]

Meanwhile, Novatus made his way to Rome. Much the same strife was going on there respecting the readmission of those who had fallen into the

[61] "Quod non martyres Evangelium faciant, sed per Evangelium martyres fiant." Ep. 23.

snares of the recent persecution. The lately consecrated Bishop, Cornelius, took the ground of Cyprian, declaring that the guilty could be forgiven by no other authority than his own. Against this decision one of his Presbyters, by name Novatian, protested on the plea that the offenders had removed themselves beyond the reach of forgiveness by any earthly power. Novatus had maintained exactly the opposite principle in relation to the Fallen at Carthage. But it had been his object not so much to assert their right, as to deny the prerogative which Cyprian had assumed in making their pardon dependent upon the episcopal pleasure. Novatus, therefore, readily attached himself to the party of Novatian in combating the Roman Bishop. Dark and trying scenes ensued. The earnest temper of the Roman Presbyter, excited by the ungoverned spirit of the Carthaginian,[62] was ripe for disturbance. Accusations were brought against Cornelius, as having fallen during the persecution, and as having subsequently owed his election to improper means.[63] Novatian finally declared himself, or suffered himself to be declared Bishop of Rome.[64] A numerous and respectable body, not only in the city, but in Italy and through the remoter dioceses, acknowledged him in the room of the Bishop to whom he was opposed.[65]

Messengers from Novatian soon reached Carthage.

[62] "Auctor Novatus." Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 70. See Cyp., Ep. 49.

[63] See Cyprian's labored defence of his Roman brother. Ep. 52.

[64] "Le premier des Antipapes." Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. III. p. 440. Cornel., ap. Eus., VI. 43.

[65] Cyp., Ep. 67. Dion. Alex., ap. Eus., VI. 45, 46. "He wrote to the churches everywhere," says Socrates, IV. 28.

One of their number came ordained to take the place of Cyprian in the same manner that Novatian had taken the place of Cornelius. But the embassy totally failed. Another was instantly sent with Novatus at its head. On the opposite side, Cornelius addressed letters to the African Bishops, perhaps to Cyprian personally, stating his case and requesting support against his adversary. Two of the African prelates, by chance returning from Rome, were of opinion that the cause of Cornelius should be espoused by their colleagues. Meantime Cyprian and the neighboring Bishops had held a council, from which two members had been appointed to proceed to Rome in order to procure unquestionable intelligence concerning the late occurrences. Their report was altogether favorable to Cornelius, whom the African Council therefore decided to uphold against Novatian.[66] The opponents of Cyprian were condemned at the same time. Novatus was again obliged to withdraw with his companions from Carthage. Nor was it long before the party of Novatian broke up at Rome.[67] Cyprian and Cornelius, the two Bishops, had carried the day against their Presbyters.

The issue of the controversies at Rome and at Carthage decided the supremacy of the Bishop in his own diocese. "We gave them their answer," writes Cyprian to Cornelius, referring to the messengers from Novatian, "nor did we omit the command

[66] Cyp., Ep. 41, 42.

[67] A sect remained under his name professing what may be called Puritan principles. Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 70. Eus., VI. 43. Novatian himself fell a martyr to the persecution under Valerian. Soc., IV. 28.

that they should put a stop to their pernicious conspiracy. We told them that it was impious to desert their Church, as it was irrational to imagine the possibility of choosing any man in the room of a living Bishop, whose election had been approved by his colleagues and his people."[68] "Many have been the lies," writes Cyprian to an African Bishop, "uttered from the devil's mouth against God's priests, in order to disturb the concord of the Catholic unity. . . . . If you would know Cornelius, it must be not from the falsehoods of malignants and slanderers, but from the judgment of the Lord God who hath made him Bishop. . . . . For Cornelius hath been made Bishop by the providence of God and of His Christ. . . . . And although the majesty of God and His kindness have hitherto protected the priest whom He chose to have created, nevertheless Cornelius hath suffered all that could be suffered. But thus hath he triumphed."[69]

So far the Catholic organization had developed itself. To determine the superiority of the Bishop to his Presbyters had been to determine the prevalence of order over disorder, of a settled rule over an unsettled anarchy. But the supremacy of the Bishop in his own diocese did not solve the question whether it was to extend into other dioceses besides his own. To decide this, was to decide between centralization and union.

Cyprian was as prominent in settling the second question as he had been in settling the first. When

[68] Ep. 41. [69] Ib. 52.

Cornelius of Rome presumed so far upon his authority as to obtrude it into one of the numerous controversies in which Cyprian engaged, the obtrusion was indignantly repelled. "They," writes Cyprian, alluding to his antagonists, "have dared not only to set up a false Bishop here,[70] but to carry letters from schismatics and profane men to the see of Peter and to the principal Church from whence the unity of the priesthood hath arisen. . . . . But whereas it hath been determined by us all, and whereas it is both right and just that the cause of every man should be heard where his offence is committed; and whereas, moreover, a portion of the flock hath been assigned to each pastor to be by him ruled and governed as by one who must render an account of his deeds unto the Lord, it is proper that those over whom we preside should not travel about, nor disturb the concord of the Bishops by deceit and boldness. On the contrary, they ought to plead their cause where they can have both accusers and witnesses. . . . . If they will abide by my judgment, let them come."[71]

Cyprian was defending himself against Cornelius. He showed the same spirit in defending others, as well as himself, against Cornelius's next successor but one, the Bishop Stephen.[72] Two Spanish Bishops, Basilides and Martialis, had been deposed, chiefly in consequence of having denied their faith

[70] The second who had been opposed to him.

[71] Ep. 55, pp. 86, 87.

[72] Succeeding Lucius in 253. Cornelius is supposed to have died by martyrdom in 252. Cyp., Ep. 67, p. 117, 68, p. 120. Anast., De Vit. Pont. Rom., 22.

during the late persecution.[73] One, if not both of them, had previously withdrawn from the functions of the bishopric. Both, however, united in entreating aid from the Roman Bishop. Against the will of their people, against the honor of those who had been appointed to succeed them, the Spanish Bishops were declared to be reinstated.

Recourse was had to Cyprian. Espousing the cause of the clergy and the laity whom the decision of the Roman had offended, the Carthaginian entered with all his heart into the controversy. He wrote to Spain in his own name and in that of many African Bishops, declaring the proceedings of Stephen to be null and void. "We must hold fast," he says, "to that which is held amongst us, and throughout almost all the provinces, that the neighboring Bishops should take part in the ordination of any Bishop raised over a people, while the people should be present and consenting at the election.[74] . . . . . Nor let it confound you," he adds, "if in these latter times faith hath become infirm, or the fear of God vacillating, or the pacific concord of the brethren disquieted. . . . . There may be some of our colleagues who think that the Divine discipline should be neglected, and who rashly communicate with Basilides and Martialis. Yet it ought not to

[73] Other offences were alleged against them. Cyp., Ep. 68.

[74] "Diligenter de traditione Divina et Apostolica observatione servandum est et tenendum quod apud nos quoque et fere per provincias universas tenetur, ut ad ordinationes rite celebrandas ad eam plebem cui præpositus ordinatur, Episcopi ejusdem provinciæ proximi quique conveniant et Episcopus deligatur, plebe præsente, quæ singulorum vitam plenissime novit et uniuscujusque actum de ejus conversatione perspexit." Ep. 68, p. 119.

perplex our faith. . . . . For it is plain that not only they who do evil, but likewise they who agree with those doing it, are worthy of punishment and death." [75] The sentence of Stephen could not have been more manfully annulled.

Cyprian again engages with the Roman prelate. The new encounter was occasioned not so much by the interference of Stephen, as by his refusal to interfere in the affairs of another diocese. Several of the Gallic Bishops had united in requesting Stephen to take some measures against Marcianus the Bishop of Arles, who had espoused the party of the Roman Presbyter Novatian. It seemed to belong to the Bishop of Rome, as the head of the community from which the party in question had issued, to declare against its supporters. Especially was this the case in Gaul, where the reverence attached to the Roman see had never been abandoned. But Stephen had no mind to satisfy his Gallic colleagues. He had upheld the Spanish Bishops against their accusers. He would uphold the Bishop of Arles against his denouncers. They therefore appealed to Cyprian. Always ready to enter the lists, the Carthaginian Bishop at once undertook the office of rousing his Roman colleague against the Bishop of Arles.

"Thou shouldest write," he says, "in the plainest terms to our fellow-Bishops of Gaul. . . . . Let letters be also directed to the diocese and to the people of Arles, so that another may be substituted

[75] Ep. 68, p. 120.

in the place of Marcianus. . . . . The numerous body of priests," he argues, "is so connected by the cement of mutual concord and by the bond of unity, that if any one of our number doth attempt playing with heresy or scattering the flock of Christ, the others must interpose. . . . . Signify, therefore, who hath been substituted for Marcianus, in order that I may know to whom I shall write, or to whom I shall commend the brethren."[76] The need of organization could not be made more apparent. Here was an attempt on Cyprian's part, or rather on the part of the Bishops with whom he sided, to do exactly what he had opposed in the matter of the Spanish Bishops. Until it was determined whether a Bishop should, or should not be independent of his colleagues, there would be other instances of the same inconsistency.

The determination of the point at issue was furthered by the outburst of a more general controversy. Differences of opinion were rife amongst the Catholic Christians as to the propriety of administering baptism to those who had been baptized by any of the Heretics. The prevailing sentiment, distinctly expressed by several Catholic councils, had apparently decided the invalidity of baptism received from Heretical hands or according to Heretical forms.[77] Whether it were from liberality, or from a desire to prove his superiority to the synods that had been called at a distance from Rome, Stephen

[76] Ep. 67.
[77] Firmilianus, ap. Cyp., Ep. 75. Dion. Alex., ap. Eus., VII. 7.

undertook to declare Heretical baptisms valid.[78] The Asiatic communities supporting the decrees of the councils were excommunicated. Other measures were prepared against the other Churches by whom the decrees were sustained. "Differing," as one of the Bishops in Asia wrote, "from so many Bishops throughout the world, he breaks the peace with each one of them in a different style of hostility."[79] It seemed as if a challenge had been offered to the whole body of prelates to prove their independence.

It was taken up by Cyprian. In the name of a council then sitting in his diocese,[80] he composed a formal address pronouncing it the duty of every Christian priest "with the Lord, and maintaining the unity of the Lord, ... to repudiate, reject and count as profane whatever His adversaries might do."[81] A larger synod, convened from all parts of Africa, sustained the decision of the former body.[82] Thus supported, Cyprian immediately addressed his "brother Stephen," communicating the declarations of the councils, and adding his own earnest appeal "to the conscience" of the Roman prelate in favor of "peace and concord amongst his colleagues." "For my own part," concludes the Carthaginian, "I would neither by force nor by dictation compel

[78] Vincent of Lerina (Comm., 9) would have it that Papa Stephanus was upholding the ancient doctrine.

[79] Firm., ap. Cyp., Ep. 75, p. 150. Dion. Alex., ap. Eus., VII. 5.

[80] At the close of 255.

[81] Ep. 70, p. 126. The same opinion is expressed in a letter of Cyprian to a Mauretanian Bishop. Ep. 71.

[82] Ib. 73, p. 129.

any one in a case like this. For every Bishop hath the free exercise of administration in his own Church." [83]

An answer was soon returned, not only controverting the arguments and repelling the entreaties of Cyprian, but also conveying the orders of the Roman Bishop that his colleagues of Africa should receive converts from "any heresy whatsoever," without the rite of baptism. [84] It is very probable that menaces of excommunication in case of disobedience accompanied the command. [85]

Cyprian was prepared. A third council was summoned. Eighty-seven Bishops from the greater portion of the African dioceses, [86] together with Presbyters, Deacons, and an unusual number of laymen, assembled at Carthage. They heard the correspondence between Cyprian and one of the African prelates on the subject concerning which the controversy with Stephen had arisen. The letters that had passed between Stephen and Cyprian were withheld out of respect, as is probable, for the Bishop of Rome. But their contents must have been well known to all who had come at Cyprian's call to declare against the doctrine and the assumption of the Roman. Cyprian opened the deliberations. "It remains for you," he said, after his documents had been recited,

[83] "Qua in re nec nos vim cuiquam facimus aut legem damus, quando habeat in ecclesiæ administratione voluntatis suæ arbitrium liberum unusquisque præpositus." Ep. 72, p. 129.

[84] Ap. Cyp., Ep. 74, p. 138.

[85] Eus., VII. 3.

[86] "Ex provincia Africa, Numidia, Mauretania." Acta Conc. Carthag., ap. Routh, Reliq. Sac., tom. III. p. 115. In the autumn of 256.

"to express your sentiments, one by one, upon this point of Heretical baptism. But ye are not to judge any one; neither are ye to separate any one of contrary opinions from your communion. No one of us here hath appointed himself the Bishop of Bishops, or driven his colleagues to the necessity of submission by any terror of tyranny. For every Bishop hath his own will as the limit of his liberty and his power, so that he can no more be judged by another Bishop than he himself can judge another one."[87] The Council agreed with their leader; and the supremacy of one Bishop over another was rejected from the Christian organization.

But was a Bishop to be unaccountable? Were he this, there could be but faint pretence on the part of his Church to the name of Catholic. Instead of its being a Church universal, it would become a Church, so to speak, of particulars. It was still to be arranged in what manner the independence of each could be harmonized with the union of all.

"The Bishop," maintains Cyprian," is in the Church, just as the Church is in the Bishop."[88] "He who hath not held fast," he asserts, "to the unity of the Church, hath lost even what he may have once possessed."[89] "This unity," he continues, "we who preside in the Church ought especially to hold

[87] "Neque enim quisquam nostrum Episcopum se Episcoporum constituit, aut tyrannico terrore ad obsequendi necessitatem collegas suos adigit, quando habeat omnis Episcopus pro licentia libertatis et potestatis suæ arbitrium proprium, tamque judicari ab alio non possit quam nec ipse potest alterum judicare." Acta Conc., as above.

[88] Ep. 69, p. 123.

[89] Ib. 52, p. 73.

and to advance, in order that we may prove the episcopate itself to be one and undivided. . . . . For the episcopate is one, and a part of it is held by each of us as belonging to a solid whole."[90] In other words, the independence of the Bishop was represented as founded on his fidelity to the principles whereon depended the union of the Catholic Church. "The bond of concord remaining," concludes the Carthaginian, "and the sacrament of the Catholic Church continuing unbroken, each Bishop disposes his own actions as one who is about to render an account of them unto the Lord."[91]

Cyprian put his principles in practice. An African Bishop, by name Therapius, had admitted an offending Presbyter to communion without either imposing the customary penance or making the customary reference to the people. "It seemed fit to us," writes Cyprian for himself and his colleagues in council assembled, "to reprimand Therapius for having done this thing rashly, and to warn him against doing so hereafter."[92] Another African, Fortunatus of Assures, who had fallen during the persecution, afterwards attempted to recover his episcopate. His people applied for advice to Cyprian. He wrote to them in the most decided tone, that it would be more becoming for Fortunatus to seek forgiveness from God than to claim authority from

[90] Episcopatus unus est cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur." De Unit. Eccl., p. 195.

[91] "Manente concordiæ vinculo, et perseverante Catholicæ ecclesiæ individuo sacramento, actum suum disponit et dirigit unusquisque Episcopus, rationem propositi sui Domino redditurus." Ep. 52, p. 72.

[92] Ep. 59.

men. "Whatever he does," adds the Carthaginian, "do not ye become participators in his errors."[93]

Thus both the independence of the Bishop in relation to his colleagues and his supremacy in relation to his people were subordinate to the union of the Church to which he and they belonged. It was with enthusiasm that Cyprian sketched "the unity of the body"[94] from which none but "the stranger, the profane and the foe" could be separated,[95] and in which there could be neither "many folds" nor "many shepherds."[96] The Catholics were "they who dwelt simple, peaceful, and unanimous in the House of God, the Church of Christ."[97] With such as these, union still stood secure against centralization.

The leaders in these movements of organization soon passed away. One and the same year witnessed the martyrdom of Stephen[98] and the banishment of Cyprian. The Carthaginian had risen above the feelings that prompted his flight in former days. The consoler of the sick,[99] the friend of the poor and the stranger,[100] the liberator of the captive,[101] could no longer tremble before his sovereign.[102] The courageous ruler of the Christians was the coura-

[93] Ep. 64.

[94] "Unitas corporis." De Unit. Eccl., p. 195. So in Ep. 30: — "Corpore totius Ecclesiæ." So in Ep. 41: — "Catholicæ Ecclesiæ corpus."

[95] De Unit. Eccl., p. 195.

[96] Ib., p. 196.

[97] Ib., ib. Planck attributes to Cyprian the idea of an outward unity belonging to the church Gesch. der Christ.-Kirchl. Gesellsch. Verfassung, vol. I. p. 100.

[98] 257. Anas., De Vit. Pont. Rom., 24.

[99] De Mort., pp. 229, 233. Pont., Vit. Cyp., 9.

[100] De Op. et Eleem., pp. 237, 246. De Orat. Dom., p. 214.

[101] Ep. 60.

[102] See Ad Demet., pp. 218, 221; De Exh. Mart., pp. 261, 263; Ep. 56.

geous subject of the Heathen. Called before the Proconsul, Cyprian answered: "I am a Christian and a Bishop. I know no other deities but the One True God who made Heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is. This God we serve, and Him we pray, day and night, for ourselves, for all men, for the Emperors themselves."[103]

On being brought back in the following year from the exile to which the Proconsul had condemned him, Cyprian was equally resolute. "The Emperors," said the Proconsul then in office, "order thee to offer sacrifice." "I will not," replied the Bishop. "Then thou shalt be put to the sword." Said Cyprian, "I thank God." The sentence was almost immediately executed in presence of a crowd of Christians who did not fear to express their grief, or even to cheer the last moments of their Bishop with words of love and proofs of constancy.[104]

Amongst the number supporting the movements in which Cyprian had been a leader, were two pupils of Origen. The master had not lived long enough to take part in developing the organization of the Catholic Christians. But his liberal principles were urged by his disciples. Firmilian, born of a distinguished family in Cappadocia, appears to have been converted as well as instructed by the

[103] Acta Procons. Cyp., 1, ap. Ruinart.

[104] 258. Pont., Vit. et Pass. Cyp., 18. Acta Proc., 5. He had presided "not only over the Church of Carthage," says Gregory of Nazienzen, "or of Africa, but over all the nations." Orat. 18, tom. 1. ed. Morell. "Beatissimus Cyprianus," exclaims Augustine, (Serm. 312,) "gloriosorum præliorum dux tor et gloriosus esse præliator."

great Alexandrian.[105] Rising to the bishopric of Cæsarea in his native province, he had maintained the most intimate relations with his teacher amidst all the persecutions and controversies of the times.[106] One of the first whom Stephen excommunicated in consequence of their variance with his sentiments upon Heretical baptism was Firmilian.[107] To him also, amongst the first, Cyprian applied on declaring against the proceedings of the Roman Bishop. A letter remains in which Firmilian replies to Cyprian, assuring him of sympathy in the measures that had been taken at Carthage. "In rupturing the peace with you," he writes, "Stephen hath also put to shame the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul. . . . . For he hath broken through the bonds of brotherhood for the sake of supporting Heretics, while he calls Cyprian a false Christ, and a false Apostle, and a worker of deceit. . . . . Yet do I wish," concludes the Cappadocian, "to be of one mind and of one opinion with you forever."[108]

The other pupil of Origen taking the same side was Dionysius, a man of rank and cultivation, who had been made Bishop of Alexandria some years before.[109] No one had passed through greater trials during the late persecutions.[110] No one had labored with more earnest charity to heal the wounds of the recent dissensions amongst the Christians. He had

[105] Greg. Nyssen., cited by Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom IV. p. 309.

[106] Eus., VI. 27.

[107] Dion. Alex., ap. Eus., VII. 5.

[108] Ap. Cyp., Ep. 75, pp. 144, 151.

[109] After succeeding to the post which Origen had held at the head of the Alexandrian school. Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 69.

[110] His own account is preserved by Eusebius, VI. 40, 41, 42.

distinguished himself especially by his endeavors to allay the excitement with regard to the treatment of the Christians who fell into the snares of their persecutors.[111] Cornelius of Rome had owed much to his support; nor had the rival Bishop Novatian owed less to the mildness with which his course had been rebuked by Dionysius.[112] On the rupture occasioned by Stephen, the Alexandrian Bishop acted consistently with his previous career. He wrote to Rome, rehearsing the arguments which Stephen had denounced, but laying much greater stress upon the importance of preserving peace. The question concerning the validity or the invalidity of Heretical baptism was treated as of inferior consequence to the strife which the Bishop of Rome was kindling throughout the Christian realms.[113]

The Alexandrian Bishop was obliged to oppose himself a second time to the pretensions of the Roman see. Not long after the death of Stephen, his next successor but one, Dionysius,[114] obtained intelligence that his namesake of Alexandria had put forth opinions in contradiction to some points in the Catholic theology. The Presbyter Sabellius of Ptolemais, in the African Pentapolis, had ventured upon deciding the vexed questions relating to the Divine nature; and in endeavoring to confute his views, Dionysius lost his foothold upon the opinions maintained amongst the Catholics.[115] A synod called by the Bishop of Rome pronounced the Alexandrian

[111] Eus., VI. 44, 46.
[112] Id., VI. 45.
[113] Ap. Eus., VII. 2, 4, 5.
[114] Ordained in 259. The affair with Dionysius of Alexandria occurred within the next year or two.
[115] The authorities are cited by Gieseler, Man. Eccl. Hist., § 60, note 10.

guilty of heresy.[116] Dionysius wrote at once to Rome to inquire into the grounds of the sentence. No sooner did he obtain the necessary information, than he drew up a decisive refutation of the charges to which his Roman colleague had lent a willing ear. "I have followed," avers the Alexandrian, "the form and canon which have been left to us by our elders, and in harmony with them have I worshipped God."[117] Again was the flame at Rome quenched.

At about the same time, Paul of Samosata gained his election to the great see of Antioch. If the description of him afterwards given by his adversaries holds good in relation to the first years of his episcopate, Paul made a strange figure for a Christian Bishop. Bearing a civil as well as an ecclesiastical title, he was wont to parade himself with numerous attendants and various affectations in the public thoroughfares. Even in his pulpit, or upon his throne, he appeared more like a sovereign surrounded by his courtiers than like the minister of the God whose worship he professed to celebrate.[118] The circumstances in which he was placed immediately after his election favored his growth in ambition rather than in Christian virtue. The war with Persia was at its height, and as the invaders from that country retired, their places in the Eastern provinces were taken by Odenathus and Zenobia the Queen. From her hands the civil appointment

[116] Athanasius, De Synod. Arim. et Seleuc., 43.

[117] Fragm. ap. Routh, Reliq. Sac., tom. III. p. 399.

[118] Ep. Concil., ap. Eus., VII. 30.

obtained by Paul appears to have come. From her coffers the means to support his expenditures seem to have been derived. The Christian Bishop became the servant of a Heathen sovereign, and that one, a woman, and in the eyes of every loyal Roman, an usurper.[119]

One would think that such a course must have provoked remonstrance and repression from the entire Church. Yet it is confessed by the prelates of the council afterwards convened against the Bishop of Antioch, that, had he been satisfied with carnal indulgence or ambitious pomp, he might have held his see until he died. The errors of doctrine into which he fell were far more serious in the opinion of his judges. Attaching himself more or less closely to the party of Sabellius, Paul began to express views concerning the nature of Christ at variance with those of his Catholic colleagues. A council was hastily summoned to meet at Antioch. Firmilian of Cappadocia attended its sessions; while its purposes were warmly supported by Dionysius of Alexandria, whose age and infirmities prevented him from appearing in person.[120] Notwithstanding the array of Bishops, present and absent, against the doctrines and the practices with which Paul had rendered himself chargeable, he totally escaped condemnation.[121] Nor when a subsequent council actually

[119] Athanasius, cited by Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. IV. p. 291.

[120] Eus., VII. 27, 28. Theodoret., Hær. Fab., II. 8.

[121] Theodoret (as above) says that Paul denied the truth of the charges against him, and declared his adherence to the Apostolic doctrine.

declared his deposition, was their sentence executed without recourse to the imperial power.[122]

So insecure were the principles of organization for which Cyprian and his adherents exerted themselves. The Carthaginian asserts the supremacy of the Bishop in his own diocese. Paul of Antioch interprets it as signifying wanton ostentation and still more wanton oppression. Cyprian argues for the episcopal independence. Paul throws himself upon the bounties of a sovereign. His judges imitate his example. The Carthaginian prelate maintains the accountability of the Bishop to the Church of which he is member. The prelates of the council against Paul profess the same doctrine. But they act as if their order were accountable to the Emperor.

Equally insecure were the relations to be adjusted by the organization of the episcopal authority. The dependence of the clergy as well as of the main body of believers rendered them sensitive to every change occurring in the prerogatives and the practices of their rulers. While such changes continued, it was impossible for the relations of the rulers, or of the subjects, or of the subjects to the rulers, to be determined.

The figures of individual believers are still brought out in relief by persecution or by oppression. Such as we might suppose to have belonged to the farthest background frequently appear amongst the foremost of the martyrs. At the close of the period

[122] Aurelian was then reigning. Eus., VII. 29, 30. See the collection of fragments in Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. III. pp. 289 *et seq.*

over which we have passed, a Christian by name Marinus was serving in the imperial army. Having risen from post to post in the legion to which he was attached, he now waited his promotion to the rank of centurion or commander. A place fell vacant; and Marinus was called to receive his commission at Cæsarea in Palestine. Gladly and gallantly, we doubt not, he came to the tribunal where the badge of office was to be conferred; but as he advanced, a comrade, the next to him in rank, exclaimed that Marinus could not be commissioned inasmuch as he would refuse sacrifice to the Emperor. Marinus, nothing daunted by the charge, yet nothing tempted by the promotion which he had so nearly obtained, replied to the excited inquiries of the presiding officers that he was certainly a Christian. Three hours were given him to reflect upon the alternative of denying his faith or losing his commission and his life. Such was the confidence, apparently, in his deciding as a soldier rather than as a Christian, that he was not even put under arrest for the allotted time.

As he walked away, he was accosted by Theotecnus, Bishop of Cæsarea. Him Marinus followed to the church where they had prayed together in other hours; and there, before the altar, the Bishop sought to confirm the resolution of his disciple. Lifting the soldier's cloak and pointing to the sword that hung beneath, Theotecnus held out the Scriptures, and bade Marinus choose between the weapon and the sacred volume. Marinus unhesitatingly grasped the Gospel. "Hold fast," exclaimed the

Bishop joyfully; "hold fast to God, and with His blessing fulfil the choice which thou hast made! Now go in peace!" Marinus went his way. The time appointed had already passed when he reached the tribunal. Having reiterated his confession of faith, he was led away "as he was," says the historian, "and made perfect by death."[123]

The heroism of the soldier was outdone by that of a mother. Marian, a reader in one of the African communities, set out with some of his brethren on a mission to Numidia. Arrested on the way, they were brought to the city of Cirtha, where they were arraigned, imprisoned and executed. As Marian lay dead, his mother, Mary,[124] embraced his corpse "in joy," says the Christian who witnessed the scene, "that she had borne such a son."[125] The liberty sealed by his death was resealed by her fortitude. Doubtless she was immediately dragged to execution.

Yet more marvellous examples of fortitude were set by Christian children. A boy of fifteen, named Dioscorus, apprehended at Alexandria during the persecution of Decius, bore so bravely with interrogatory, menace and torture, that he was actually released.[126] The same persecution, or the later one under Valerian, witnessed not only the torture but the martyrdom of a still younger sufferer. A letter

[123] Eus., VII. 15. Ruinart (Act. Mart., tom. II. p. 130) says this was about 262.

[124] "Nomen non inane portabat, non frustra Maria vocabatur." August., Serm. 284, 2.

[125] Acta Jac. Mar. *et al.*, 13, Ap. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. II. pp. 58 *et seq.*

[126] Dion. Alex., ap. Eus., VI. 41.

from an unknown hand tells how Cyril, the son of a Heathen parent at Cæsarea,[127] incurred the anger of his playmates and the cruelty of his father by professing to be a Christian. Brought before a judge he was threatened with punishment, and then dismissed with advice as of too tender years to be formally sentenced. But the boy was proof against the counsel as well as against the threat that would have persuaded him to renounce the faith of his young heart. "The house where I want to dwell," he said in answer to the judge's command that he should return home, "that house is greater than my father's, and its treasures are much more precious. These I wish to obtain from my Master. Kill me more quickly that I may more quickly enjoy them." Some, standing by, began to weep. "Ye ought to laugh," he said, "and lead me gladly to death. But ye know not the place where I would go, nor the hope that I have. Just let me die." He had his wish.[128]

While the weakest, like the child, the tenderest, like the mother, and the strongest, like the soldier, were faithful, the Christians would be free. The persecutors might seem to triumph. But they really failed. All their vindictiveness, all their might was insufficient to deprive the Christians of their liberty. It was a liberty that proved itself the most secure, the most sustaining in the midst of the greatest

[127] Perhaps of Cappadocia, in which case the Bishop Firmilian, as Ruinart suggests, may have been the author of the letter. Acta Mart., tom. II. pp. 105 *et seq.*

[128] Epis., as above, p. 107.

trials, the greatest perils. For it was a liberty belonging to none so much as to the subject.

This was the liberty upheld by the organization that has been described. The inward spirit was far more essential than the outward form. But the institutions developed amongst the Christians contributed to sustain the liberty on which they depended for all that they had, for all that they hoped to have. Their work could be prosecuted more effectually. The union which they were to prepare could be more successfully ushered in.

CHAPTER IX.

LIFE OR DEATH FOR THE EMPIRE.

"Immortale nihil mundi compage tenetur,
Non orbis, non regna hominum, non aurea Roma."
JUVENCUS, *De Hist. Evan.*, *Prol.*

THE breaking up of the Empire appeared to be at hand. An Eastern Empire had been formed by Zenobia out of the Syrian, Egyptian and Asiatic provinces. The Western provinces had been turned into a Gallic Empire by the Senator Pesuvius Tetricus. On the Northern boundaries a host of foes were advancing in constantly increasing numbers. "Hear," wrote the Emperor Claudius[1] to the Senate and the people of Rome, "hear now what is true. Three hundred and twenty thousand armed barbarians have broke into our territory. If I conquer them, you will acknowledge my deserts. If I do not, you must remember that I have to fight after my predecessors and all the thousand usurpers who revolted in contempt for their sovereigns. The whole state is exhausted. There are no shields, no swords,

[1] Aurelius Claudius, proclaimed by the conspirators against Gallienus, in 268.

no darts to be procured. Tetricus holds Gaul and Spain, where are our chief means. What is shameful to confess, Zenobia has control of all our archers. If we can do anything, it will be wonderful."[2] It was a question of life or death for the Roman Empire.

Who was to decide it? Not the masses, who had no power over their own fortunes. Not the ruling classes, the courtiers, or the dominant soldiers, who seemed to have no thought for any other fortunes besides their own. The troops, lately ruling alone, had left the Empire defenceless abroad, resourceless at home. Not yet had the Christians obtained the power to restrain their rulers or to animate their fellow-subjects. There were none to act at the present emergency besides the Emperors. Few of those before them had contributed to the preservation of their realms.[3] Yet some rare intervals of public order had borne witness to the energy of the reigning sovereigns. Such as possessed the nominal supremacy, if no more, in an Empire like the Roman were the most likely to be affected by its fortunes. Were these prosperous, the ruler knew it best. Were they adverse, he felt it most. At the same time, he appeared most able to repair them, in case they were failing, or to urge them on in case they were advancing. In him centred the resources of his dominions. If any one could employ them, whe-

[2] Treb. Poll., Claud., 7.

[3] "Vides, quæso, quam pauci sint Principes boni, ut bene dictum sit a quodam scurra Claudii hujus temporibus, 'in uno anulo bonos Principes posse perscribi ac depingi.'" Vop., Aur., 42.

ther for increase or for preservation, it seemed to be the sovereign. What the Emperors could do for their Empire was to be tried once more.

The three hundred and twenty thousand invaders of whom Claudius wrote bore the name of Goths. They were routed in Mœsia after numerous battles.[4] In following up his victory, the Emperor perished,[5] leaving it to his successor to carry on the deliverance which he had but begun. His brother Quintillus was proclaimed by the troops of whom he held command at Aquileia in Italy. But a general in the army of Claudius proved more acceptable to the legions at large. Quintillus slew himself to make way for Valerianus Aurelianus.[6] He reigned for less than five years.[7] Yet in that short time, Aurelian scattered the Goths,[8] drove out some German invaders from Italy,[9] and recovered the territories long severed from the imperial realms by various parties, particularly by Tetricus and Zenobia.[10] But to keep down the northern foes, the victorious Emperor was obliged to settle many of them in his realms. To the more boisterous he actually gave up Dacia, which they had conquered, while, to preserve appearances, the name of the surrendered province was transferred to a part of Mœsia.[11] In the midst of

[4] 269. Zos., I. 45. Treb. Poll., Claud., 9.

[5] 270. Zos., I. 46. Treb. Poll., Claud., 12.

[6] Zos., I. 47. Treb. Poll:, Claud., 12.

[7] 270 to 275.

[8] Not, however, without reverses. On his victories, see Dexippus, De Bell Scyth., Exc.; Vop., Aur., 22.

[9] Id., ib., 18 *et seq.*

[10] Zos., I. 50 *et seq.*, 61. Tetricus, declared "Corrector totius Italiæ," died at a great age. Treb. Poll., Trig. Tyr., 24. Eutr., IX. 9. Zenobia ended her life at or near Tibur. Treb. Poll., Trig. Tyr., 30.

[11] Eutr., IX. 9. Vop., Aur., 39.

plans[12] to restore the imperial institutions, Aurelian was slain by one of his officers, incensed in common with his subjects[13] at his capricious cruelties.[14]

After some months of uncertainty, the soldiery allowed the Senate to select a sovereign from their own body. The aged Claudius Tacitus was accordingly declared, only, however, to be removed within a few months, apparently by the hands of his soldiers.[15] His place was taken by his brother Florianus, who soon after encountered the same fate.[16] Meanwhile, the perils of the Empire had been renewed on all sides. The question of life or death was still to be decided.

A new deliverer appeared. Aurelius Probus, long in favor with his sovereigns and his fellow-subjects, was proclaimed by the legions in the East. Under him, the dangers pressing in from all quarters were arrested. Some of the foes were quieted by being admitted to habitations in the imperial territory.[17] Others were subdued by arms. The imperial eagles were once more borne in offensive warfare through Germany and beyond the Danube.[18] The insurgents

[12] Amongst which was the project of persecuting the Christians. Eus., VII. 30.

[13] Some of the highest rank were implicated in the tumult known as the "Monetariorum bellum" at Rome. Vop., Aur., 38. Eutr., IX. 9. The populace was pacified by largesses of pork. Vop., Aur., 35.

[14] Id., ib., 36. Zos., I. 62.

[15] 276. Zos., I. 63, 65. Vop., Tac., 13, Prob., 13. Zonaras, XII. 28.

[16] Vop., Flor., 1. He also had been declared by the Senate. Zon., XII. 29.

[17] "Centum millia Bastarnarum in solo Romano constituit .... cum et ex aliis gentibus plerosque pariter transtulisset, id est, ex Gepidis, Gautunnis et Vandalis." Vop., Prob., 18. Zosimus (I. 71,) tells the story of some Franks who made their way home by the ocean from the Pontic province on the Euxine where they had been settled.

[18] Vop., Prob., 13, 16, 17. Zos., I. 67, 69, 71.

within the Roman borders were successively overcome.[19] Six years, however, were all that Probus had to strengthen his dominions, when his soldiers, excited by the control exercised over them, put him to death near his birthplace in Pannonia.[20]

Aurelius Carus succeeded with his two sons as colleagues. The elder, Carinus, was left to govern the Western provinces, while the younger, Numerianus, accompanied his father in an expedition against Persia which cost Carus his life.[21] Numerianus was despatched not long afterwards by his Prætorian Præfect.[22] Carinus, marching against the Emperor who emerged from the scenes of murder, was slain by his own officers.[23] The sole remaining sovereign was Valerius Diocletianus, by birth a freedman's son,[24] and lately the commander of the imperial body-guard.[25]

Diocletian took possession of a throne which all the efforts of his predecessors had but just saved from utter overthrow. Sovereign after sovereign had been murdered or had died in such a manner as to appear to have met a violent death. Brothers and sons, in attempting to succeed their kinsmen, had no sooner been proclaimed than they were deserted or assassinated. The more precarious the succession of

[19] "Minusculos tyrannos." Vop., Firm., 1, Prob., 18. Zos., I. 66. Zon., XII. 29.

[20] 282. Vop., Prob., 20–22. Eutr., IX. 11. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXVII. 4.

[21] 283. Vop., Car., 13. Zon., XII. 30.

[22] 284. Vop., Car. Num. et Carin., 12.

[23] 285. Id., ib., 17. He had wrought fearful havoc in the West. Eunapius, Frag., ed. Nieb., p. 99.

[24] "Obscurissime natum." Eutr., IX. 13. His original name was Diocles. Aur. Vict., Epit., XXXIX. 1.

[25] "Domesticos regens." Id., Cæs., XXXIX. 1.

the Emperors, the more seditious were their soldiers, the more disturbed were their subjects. Nor could disturbances, seditions and massacres so frequently recur without provoking the foes who stood watching their opportunities for irruption and carnage. All this had been within the experience of Diocletian before he rose by bloody means to the throne on which men seated themselves as if to be slain. He was determined that it should be so no longer.

"For it is of the highest criminality," he declared in one of his earliest edicts, "to change what is keeping its course after having been defined and appointed by the ancients."[26] A later decree contains expressions of the same nature. "To our pious and devout minds," it declares, "those things that have been sacredly constituted by the Roman laws appear especially venerable and worthy of being observed with an eternal fidelity."[27] Strong in these convictions, and in the resolution to support them, the freedman's son resolved to restore the imperial authority as the only safeguard both of its possessors and its subjects.

His first act, however, was to violate the ancient forms. Within a year from his accession he conferred the rank of Cæsar upon Aurelius Maximianus, one of his most valiant and most trusted generals. The year after, the Cæsar was declared Augustus, with the title of Herculius; that of Jovius being assumed by Diocletian as the superior.[28] At the same time

[26] Cod. Greg lib. XIV. tit. IV. 2, ed. Hänel.

[27] Ib., lib. V. tit. I. 1, 6.

[28] 285, 286. Eutr., IX. 14. Idatius, cited by Tillemont, Hist. des Emp., tom. IV. p. 7, and note V. p. 597.

the provinces were separated into two great divisions, whereof the Eastern was retained by Diocletian, who fixed his abode at Nicomedia in Bithynia. The Western provinces were put under the authority of Maximian, who chose Milan for his residence.

Hardly had the sovereigns set out for their respective capitals, when the dangers against which they were preparing themselves broke out in all directions. It seems as if foreign and domestic foes had joined in general defiance. Maximian was already charged with the reduction of the Gallic peasantry, who, under the name of the Bagaudæ, had risen against their oppressive lords.[29] From one corner of the imperial realms to the other, the cries of insurgents, sometimes banded, sometimes separated, rang loud and fearful. Egypt was stirring. Britain was in an uproar. It found its chieftain in the person of Carausius, the commander of the northern fleet, who compelled the imperial rulers to acknowledge him for their colleague.[30] All the while, the enemies on the northern and eastern frontiers were threatening fresh invasions.[31] Was there any hope for the distracted Empire? It still depended on its sovereigns.

But they were not sufficiently numerous. So

[29] Their grievances are told by Salvian, De Gub. Dei, v. p. 162. Their efforts are alluded to in the Paneg. Vet., Mam., I. 4, Eum., III. 4, Id., VII. 4.

[30] "Ille Pirata," exclaims the imperial panegyrist. Mam., I. 12. Carausius was murdered in 293. But Britain was not recovered until some years afterwards, when his murderer, Allectus, was overcome by an officer of Constantius. Eutr., IX. 14. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIX. 20. See Geoffrey of Monmouth, book v. ch. 3 *et seq.*

[31] Eutr., IX. 15. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIX. 20 *et seq.*

thought Diocletian, who had already called one colleague to his aid. He must now have more. Two able commanders, Galerius Maximianus and Flavius Constantius, were appointed Cæsars. Galerius, in early life a Dacian herdsman,[32] was adopted by Diocletian whose daughter he received in marriage. Constantius, of higher origin,[33] became at once the son-in-law and the adopted son of Maximian. A second division of the provinces ensued. Diocletian, keeping his court at Nicomedia, took upon himself the government of Egypt, Syria and Asia Minor. Thrace, Macedonia, Greece and Illyria, with Sirmium for a capital, were assigned to the Cæsar Galerius. Maximian, still residing at Milan, retained the administration of Italy, Sicily, and the greater portion of Africa. The Cæsar Constantius received a part of Africa, with Spain, Gaul, and Britain for his provinces, of which the capital was fixed at Treves.[34]

The effect of increasing the number of sovereigns was all that could have been desired. The rebellions, whether of individuals, of troops, or of races, were reduced by the elder Emperors. To the younger Cæsars, as to fresher spirits, were entrusted the wars upon the frontiers. Galerius led his legions against the Persians.[35] Constantius recovered Britain, ex-

[32] Eutr., IX. 14. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIX. 24.

[33] "Per filiam nepos Claudii." Eutr., IX. 14. He went by the name of Constantius Chlorus.

[34] 292. De Mort. Pers., 7, 8. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIX. 25, 30, 45. Eutr., IX. 14. Praxagoras, cited by Tillemont, Hist. des Emp., tom. IV. p. 23, with note XII. p. 604.

[35] Peace was concluded in 298, on condition, as the imperial historians affirm, of large cessions by the Persian king. Pet. Patric., Exc. de Leg., 3, ed. Nieb., p. 135. Sext. Ruf., Brev., 14.

pelled the invaders from Gaul, and carried his own arms eastward of the Rhine.[36] It was still found necessary to settle the stranger upon the imperial soil.[37] It was still found necessary to protect the borders by fortifications.[38] But the immediate peril was averted. It was twenty years from the accession of Diocletian when he celebrated his triumph at Rome as the preserver of the Empire.[39]

During this time, the imperial authority had risen above the order to which it had long been subject. The position which the Emperors occupied as the defenders of their realms rendered them superior to the soldiers who had never shown themselves defenders. As early as at the elevation of Maximian, the Prætorians were deprived of their peculiar immunities.[40] In their place, a troop of ordinary bodyguards was attached to the Emperors.[41] The legions, divided into four armies under as many sovereigns, were removed from the temptation of setting up their own Emperors as well as from the opportunity of uniting in a general revolution.

The restraints thus put upon the military would seem to have left the subject classes in greater se-

[36] Eutr., IX. 25. Pan. Vet., Eum., VI. 6. Zon., XII. 31.

[37] Eutr., IX. 25. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIX. 38, 39, 43. See the panegyrics.

[38] A law of Diocletian and Maximian transfers to the fortifications the funds previously employed in the public games. Cod. Just., lib. XI. tit. XLI.

[39] 303. The Vicennalia in honor of the twentieth anniversary of the Emperor's accession was celebrated at the same time. De Mort. Pers., 17. Eutr., IX. 16. Eus., Chron., Ad Ann. Diocl. 18.

[40] Their numbers also were diminished. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIX. 47. They were afterwards disbanded by Constantine. Id., XL. 25. Zos., II. 17.

[41] Styled Jovians and Herculians. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XXXIX. 18. Zos., III. 30.

curity. To a certain degree, this proved to be the case. The upper ranks, whose members were vested with the offices lingering at Rome or with those starting up at the imperial residences, found themselves exercising their functions under the protection of the sovereigns. Part of the policy pursued by Diocletian and his associates was to restore the dignity of civil life, as if in order to provide the Emperors with support against any possible reactions of the soldiery. Nor did the lower orders go unbenefited. It was of daily advantage that the troops quartered amongst them should be kept under more rigid discipline. It was of occasional advantage that the sovereign should again be able to bestow a largess upon the needy or to save the oppressed from outrage. The laws of Diocletian and his colleagues in favor of personal liberty[42] go far to prove that the sovereigns saw the necessity of relieving their subjects if they would maintain themselves.

Yet to a certain degree, both the inferior and the superior classes were burdened rather than relieved by the administration of Diocletian. His measures seemed to have reduced the number of the ruling class. They therefore seemed to have diminished the burdens of the ruled. But was it really thus? "So much greater," says a contemporary, "was the number of receivers than of payers, that the resources of the agricultural population especially were totally consumed. Fields were abandoned, and cultivated

[42] Cod. Just., lib. IV. tit. X. 3 *et seq.* Lib. VII. tit. XVI. 8 *et seq.*

lands returned to wildernesses."[43] Such taxation, such distress as this marks the trials of the subjects. Their rulers appeared to be lessened. But they had been actually multiplied. Each one of the Emperors, each one of the Cæsars, had his dependents, if they were not his masters, to be satisfied with pomp and plunder. Every such dependent upon the sovereign was a burden upon the subject.[44] The result of the policy pursued by Diocletian and his colleagues was to be sought at the imperial court. There were to be seen men of every class on bended knee, "adoring," in the phrase of the panegyrist, "the sacred presence."[45] The humiliation of the subjects was universal.

But did that save the Empire? Did the exaltation of the Emperors promise security to their subjects, to their realms, even to themselves? It rather showed the unfitness of the sovereign to be the saviour of his dominions.[46] It proved his capacity to be limited chiefly to the adornment, perhaps partly to the strengthening of his throne. Even to do this, a sacrifice had been made. The power, the majesty of the Emperor rested upon the principle of the ancient centralization. What else had been done by

[43] De Mort. Pers., 7, and more striking still, 23. On the method of assessing taxes, see Gibbon's Hist., ch. xvii. Gibbon, however, omits the capitation tax.

[44] "Provinciæ quoque in frusta concisæ, multi præsides et plura officia singulis regionibus ac pæne jam civitatibus incubare, item rationales multi, et magistri, et vicarii præfectorum." De Mort. Pers., 7.

[45] Mam., II. 11. "Adorarique se jussit [Diocletianus] cum ante eum cuncti salutarentur." Eutr., IX. 16. So Eus., Chron., Ad Ann. ccxcv.

[46] "L'Empereur, dernier et inutile défenseur des institutions nationales." Beugnot, Dest. du Pag., tom. I. p. 72.

Diocletian and his colleagues, but to break through this system of the past? There had been but one sovereign. There were now four. Was this life or death for the Empire?

CHAPTER X.

LIFE OR DEATH FOR THE CHRISTIANS.

"Diocletian's fiery sword
Works busy as the lightning."

WORDSWORTH.

IMMEDIATE peril to the imperial institutions had ceased. But amongst those dwelling beneath them, there was a large proportion still looking for their approaching dissolution. Was not the ancient centralization divided? Had not its division been the only condition upon which its life was preserved? Would not its end soon follow? Such questions must have been on the lips of many a Christian.

Dreams concerning the overthrow of the Empire had long been cast into the forms of prophecies amongst the Christians. "O ye," they had exclaimed, "who are mortal, carnal, and of no worthiness, how easily are ye elated, without considering the termination of your existence to be at hand!"[1] "O

[1] Thus opens the Proem to the Sybilline Oracles. Thorlacius supposed nearly the whole of these to have been composed in the second century. Opusc. Acad., tom. IV. pp. 213 *et seq.*, tom. V. pp. 1 *et*

stately Rome," the Christians had often repeated, "celestial vengeance shall come upon thee from on high! And thou shalt bend thy neck, and shalt be razed to the earth, and shalt be consumed with fire as thou liest prostrate. And thy wealth shall perish, while wolves and foxes shall dwell amidst thy ruins, and thou shalt be wholly desolate as if thou hadst never existed. . . . . The end of the world, the latter day, draws nigh. . . . . But first, O Rome, shall be beheld thy punishment and thy distress. No more shall Syrian, or Greek, or Barbarian, or any race stoop beneath thy servile yoke. Thou shalt be torn asunder and shalt pay with fear and trembling the penalty of all the evil that thou hast done. A triumph shalt thou be to the world which thou hast conquered!" [2]

The greater number of Christians, however, regarded the fall of the Empire as a calamity rather than a deliverance. "The truth appears," says a writer of the present period, "that the destruction of all things is at hand. There is but one means of averting the fear of it, and that is, the safety of Rome. When that great power shall perish, and the crash whereof the Sybils prophesy shall arrive, who can doubt that the end of human affairs hath come? That power alone hath sustained all things until now. And we must pray that the coming of the evil day may be deferred." [3] Even where less

seq. Bleek assigns different portions to different periods. Theol. Zeitschrift, vol. I. pp. 120 *et seq.*, vol. II. pp. 172 *et seq.*, especially pp. 231–234.

[2] Sybill., VIII. 37 *et seq.*, ed. Didot. Bleek doubts whether this passage belongs to the second or to the early part of the fifth century. I incline to the earlier date.

[3] Lactantius, Div. Inst., VII. 25.

appeared to be staked upon the Empire, its termination might be regarded as a greater calamity to its subjects than any which its continuance could inflict upon them. Oppression did not appear so perilous to the Christian as the sacrifice of every association in which he had been reared, of every institution to which he had been subjected. What had he to set up in place of the power by which the world was swayed? Principles, holy indeed, and able to govern men. But the forms, the statutes and the offices in which his principles might work, did not yet exist. There was nothing to be immediately substituted for the imperial dominion.

So felt the greater portion of the Christians. There were some to repeat the predictions and to count the proofs of overthrow impending upon the Empire. But there were more, far more, to desire its preservation. Many even labored for it. The number of those holding offices of distinction at the courts and in the armies[4] implies the activity of a still larger number in inferior stations. There were few Christians, we may believe, who had not taken direct or indirect part in the struggle of life or death for the Empire.

Never, on the other hand, had the generality of Christians been the objects of deeper or more bitter suspicions. The public dangers, it would be asserted, made it imperative upon all classes to adhere to the ancient institutions. This the Chrisians could

[4] Eus., VII. 32, VIII. 1, 6, 9, 11. See the letter from Theonas, Bishop of Alexandria, to Lucianus, "Cubiculariorum Præpositus," ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. III. pp. 440 *et seq.*

not do in such a way as to satisfy the Heathen. By the lower orders, they would be hated as conspiring against the customs of their province or the glories of their race. By men of position and of education, they would be despised as opposing every interest of learning, of property and of rank. Darker still were the sentiments of the sovereigns. By them the Christians were scorned as unruly subjects, building temples[5] without authority, appointing priests without license, while they lived and died for principles the most adverse to the laws and to the rulers of the Empire. At the same time, they were presenting themselves amongst the magistrates of the tribunals or the courtiers of the palaces. But for the cares absorbing their rulers, the Christians, it was hinted, would not have been so bold. Everywhere they were advancing. Everywhere they met with reviving foes.

At the head of these stood the Cæsar, afterwards the Emperor Galerius. He who had been a herdsman of Dacia was of the stamp to become a wanton ruler. He showed his temper in his treatment of the Heathen. He showed it still more clearly in his hostility towards the Christians. Nor were his own passions the only ones excited against the votaries of the new religion. His mother, a woman of northern blood,[6] was much addicted to the rev-

[5] Upwards of forty churches — "inter quadraginta et quod excurrit," says Optatus (cited by Bingham, Christ. Ant., Book IX. ch. v. § 1, note *g*) — existed in Rome alone. But the majority of these were undoubtedly mere halls or houses. On the earliest churches see Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. III. p. 274, or Greg. Naz., De Vit. Greg. Thaum., tom. III. p. 567, ed. Morell.

[6] "Transdanuviana." De Mort. Pers., 9.

elries accompanying the ceremonies and the festivals according to the ancient creed. Incensed that certain Christians attached to the imperial household should have refused to appear at her banquets, she complained of them to her son. His detestation of the Christians was thus increased to utter fury.

He turned to Diocletian. The elder Emperor was in the mood to hear his vindictive son-in-law. Already had Diocletian fulminated his edicts against the Christians. Once it was because his priests declared them to be denounced in an oracle from Apollo, as opposing the worship of that deity.[7] At another time, it was because his soothsayers complained of the presence of his Christian attendants as interfering with the omens on which the Heathen depended.[8] Diocletian was superstitious. But he yielded less to his superstition as a man than to his imperiousness as a sovereign, when he ordered that all employed in the imperial service should take part in the public sacrifices under pain of scourging and dismissal. It angered, far more than it alarmed him to see his Christian subjects assuming independence.[9] The shadow of liberty which they claimed was too much for any Emperor to bear.[10] At this crisis he was accosted by Galerius.

Imperious as he was, Diocletian was still circum-

[7] Eus., Vit. Const., II. 51, 52.

[8] 298. De Mort. Pers., 10. See what must have followed amongst the soldiers, in the Acta Marcelli et Maximiani, ap. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. II. pp. 208 *et seq.*

[9] "Le seul mot des droits," says one who could speak from experience, "était un blasphème, un vrai crime." Mém. de Ste Hélène, 21, 22 Mars, 1816.

[10] "Christiani," says the imperial biographer, "quibus præsentia semper tempora cum enormi libertate displiceant." Vop., Saturn., 7.

spect. He had made every sort of sacrifice to keep life in his Empire. Was he now to stand up rigidly against conceding aught to the Christians? They thronged his court, his cities, his realms. To subdue them would be a work of blood and of peril. Would it not be better to conciliate, to deceive them? Galerius urged instant suppression. "The world," replied his father-in-law, "will be thrown into confusion, if we attack the Christians." But Galerius insisted. Not all the caution of the elder Emperor was proof against the passions thus excited by his son-in-law. The wives of Diocletian and Galerius, both said to have been Christians, interceded in vain. Without consulting the other sovereigns, it was determined between Diocletian and Galerius to sound the alarum of persecution throughout their realms.[11]

Never had persecution begun more fearfully. Without a note of warning, the Christians of Nicomedia were startled, one morning, by the sack and demolition of their church.[12] Few who heard the blows of axes, or beheld the fall of the temple walls, could have been blind to the peril which menaced their fortunes and their lives. It was not merely the destruction of an edifice that would content their adversaries. From the palace or from the squares where the Heathen population must have gathered exultingly, reports would come to increase the apprehensions of the Christians.

[11] 303. Eus., VIII. 2. Galerius confessed to having been the mainspring. Id., VIII. 17. De Mort. Pers., 34.

[12] It was the day of the ancient festival of the Terminalia: "ut quasi terminus imponeretur huic religioni." De Mort. Pers., 12.

Not until the next day, however, was there any formal declaration of hostilities. An edict then appeared commanding instant and terrible proceedings against the Christians. Their churches were to be razed. Their Scriptures were to be destroyed. They themselves were to be deprived of their estates and offices. Such as had neither station nor possession to lose were to be reduced to servitude.[13] No such persecution had ever been proclaimed.

It was boldly met. Far from cowering before the menaces from the palace, the Christians bore up even rashly. No sooner was the proclamation against them posted in public view, than it was torn down and rent to pieces by one whom the historian describes as a personage of great eminence at the court. He was put to death.[14] But he left many ready to imitate his example. The violence offered to the persons of the Christians would be repeatedly parried. The outrages attempted against their sacred possessions would be again and again resisted. They had become numerous, as has been related. They had become influential, even powerful. Could they submit at once? Or at last?

Some days or weeks, crowded with resistance as well as suffering, went by. Suddenly, a fire broke out in the palace at Nicomedia. It was of course laid at the charge of the Christians. Nor was any

[13] Eus., VIII. 2. Maxim., ap. Eus., IX. 10. On the destruction of the Scriptures, Acta Felicis, I. ap. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. II. p. 323. On the degradation of the Christians, De Mort. Pers., 13. Freedmen seem to have been ordered back into servitude, while slaves were declared incapable of receiving manumission. See the Chron. Pasch., Ad Ann. 303.

[14] Eus., VIII. 5. De Mort. Pers., 13.

heed given to their declaration that their enemies had kindled the conflagration in order to obtain a pretext for more violent hostilities.[15] Some movements occurring in the eastern provinces were also ascribed to Christian machinations. Vainly was it pleaded on the other side that the Christians had no intention to excite sedition. The sense of the injustice inflicted upon them led to apprehension on the part of their opponents even more surely than to revolution on their own part.[16] Nor had their resolute demeanor lessened the anxiety of their adversaries as to the consequences of the proceedings against them. They had shown themselves undaunted in repelling their assailants. Might they not prove equally undaunted in retaliating upon those by whom they were aggrieved?

Our authorities, however, are neither harmonious nor clear as to the events which followed. It seems that the Christians employed at the court were seized and put to the rack. The Empresses, suspected of sharing the faith of the sufferers, were compelled to offer public sacrifice.[17] Fiercer assaults ensued. A second edict from the palace ordered the arrest of the Christian priests.[18] A third commanded that the prisoners should be forced to sacrifice according to the Heathen ritual under pain

[15] Eus., VIII. 6. Two fires are mentioned in De Mort. Pers., 6.

[16] And, as Butler remarks, "The sense which mankind have of tyranny, injustice, oppression, additional to the mere feeling or fear of misery, has doubtless been instrumental in bringing about revolutions." Anal. of Rel., Part I. ch. III.

[17] De Mort. Pers., 15. Eus., Vit. Const., I. 15.

[18] Eus., VIII. 6. Also App. to VIII. 17. Chron. Pasch., Ad Ann. 303.

of torture.[19] When the dungeons were filled, and the racks within them were busy with their horrid work, a fourth edict, more searching and more pitiless than any, was published. By this the proper officers were directed to arrest every Christian whom they could discover, and bring him to one of the Heathen temples. There, magistrates were to hold themselves in readiness to see that sacrifice was offered by all who had been arrested.[20] Was this persecution? It was rather extermination.

Letters were despatched to demand the co-operation of the Emperor Maximian and the Cæsar Constantius. The latter, it is said, refused.[21] Yet there were no limits that could be set to the persecution by any one of the sovereigns. From the instant that the spark was struck at Nicomedia, the blaze would spread eastward and westward through every province where material had been prepared by the animosities between the Christian and the Heathen. The Cæsar who is described as having disapproved of torturing or murdering his Christian subjects allowed their churches to be destroyed.[22] From an assault upon the altars to one upon the persons of the Christians there was but one step, which was as speedily taken in the realms of Constantius as in those of his colleagues.

[19] Eus., VIII. 6, 10. App. to VIII. 17. Tortures hereupon inflicted are also described by Eusebius, VIII. 3, 8, 10, and Mart. Palest., 1.

[20] De Mort. Pers., 15. This fourth edict is sometimes ascribed to the following year, 304, in consequence, apparently, of a slightly ambiguous expression in Eus., Mart. Palest., 3.

[21] De Mort. Pers., 15.

[22] Ib., ib. Eus., Vit. Const., I. 13, 16.

None suffered more than the Christians in Britain. One of their clergy, flying from his persecutors, found refuge in the house of Alban, a Heathen of Verulam. Touched by the devotion of the fugitive, Alban sought his society, and became converted to his faith. When the men in pursuit of the Christian tracked him to his hiding place, his robe was donned by Alban, who surrendered himself to be led in chains before the magistrate. The appearance of so noted a Heathen as Alban in the guise of a Christian priest, excited the utmost surprise at the tribunal. He was instantly threatened by the magistrate with the punishment due to the stranger whom he had harbored, unless he cast off his unwonted attire and confessed his faith in the Heathen divinities. "I will not obey you," replied Alban. Then said the imperial functionary, as if perplexed concerning the identity of the prisoner with the Heathen Alban, "Of what family art thou?" "Why ask you that?" answered the prisoner. "I am now a Christian." "But thy name," insisted the magistrate; "tell it me." "My parents called me Alban; but I worship the Only True and Living God." Scourged before the tribunal, Alban reiterated his assertion, until the magistrate lost patience and ordered him to be put to death.[23] "It was to save Britain," exclaims the monk of Bangor, some two centuries afterwards, "to save it from being wrapped in the thick shades of night, that God, of His own

[23] Bede relates the miracles believed to have accompanied the execution. Eccl. Hist., Book I. ch. 7.

free grace, lit up amongst us the bright luminaries of holy martyrs."[24]

The intensity of the persecution was in no degree diminished by the extent over which it spread.[25] All that violence could do was done to increase the terror and the anguish of the Christians. Indignities too shameful, too agonizing, as it seemed, to be borne, were inflicted everywhere.[26] "It is impossible," says the eye-witness, "to tell of all."[27] "We were invaded," he exclaims, "as if in war, and treated as though we had not been living beings."[28] Some were thrown into dungeons to renounce their faith or to die amidst the agonies of which they had no fear. Long trains of those who survived imprisonment were sent across the country or beyond the sea to labor like brutes in the public mines.[29] In many cities, the streets must have been literally blocked up with the stakes and scaffolds where death was dealt alike to men and women and little children. It mattered nothing of what rank the victims were. The poorest slave and the first officer of the imperial treasury[30] were massacred with equal savageness. Before a single tribunal were heard the groans of the Roman, the provincial and the barbarian, stretched upon the same rack or condemned by the same sentence to execution. A town in Phrygia, noted for

[24] Gildas, § 10.

[25] "The foot
That leaves the print of blood where'er it walks." *King John.*

[26] Phileas, Ep. ad Thmuit., ap. Routh, Reliq. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 87 *et seq.*

[27] Eus., VIII. 12.

[28] Id., VIII. 10.

[29] Generally after being mutilated. Id., Mart. Palest., 7, 8, 10.

[30] Eus., VIII. 11.

the unanimity of its inhabitants in the Christian cause, was with them all destroyed by sword and fire.[31] The memory of man embraces no such strife, if that can be called a strife, in which there was but one side armed, but one side slain.

Save for this, the persecution would have deserved the name of a civil war. The resemblance was remarked by the Christian orator as he commemorated in the ensuing century the sufferings of the martyrs. "They who broke in from without, the judges, the magistrates and the soldiers of the time, were not of foreign or barbarian race. Neither were they from another empire or another kingdom. But they were men governed by the same laws, inhabiting the same country, members of the same society. It was a civil war, and all the more terrible from the fact that it was waged against the Christians by their own kindred. . . . . All laws of relationship," concludes Chrysostom, "were trampled down, and the entire universe was overturned."[32] The confusion of the time can hardly be exaggerated. Nor can the agony of the Christians be overrated. But there was no such action on their part as to give the persecution the positive semblance of a civil war. They had not submitted to the first blows. But they had dealt none in return, either at the beginning or during the continuation of the strife against them. Was it for them to arm themselves? Was their liberty to be maintained by warfare?

They knew the contrary. They estimated the op-

[31] Eus., VIII. 11. Lactant., Instit. Div., V. 11.

[32] Hom. 51, ap. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. III. pp. 113, 114.

pression from which they were suffering at the true point. "The prison," according to the poet who sings of their martyrs, "was their crown. . . . . Death was their festival."[33] Yet they had more to do than to defend themselves. The cause for which they were persecuted was itself at stake. It could not then allow them to fold their arms as if they had no other duty than submission to imprisonment and execution. The edicts from the imperial thrones seemed to be issued not merely in hatred of the Christians, but in defiance of the Throne in Heaven to which the Christians knelt.[34] Such a view of the course pursued by their sovereigns kindled a spirit amongst the Christians that might never have been stirred by the aspect or by the experience of their own wrongs. Even then, however, it was not with weapons or in affrays that they withstood their persecutors. Yet how otherwise was resistance to be made? It was with wonderful inspiration that the Christians found the means to uphold their faith, to preserve their liberty. The persecution was not so remarkable for its intensity or for its extent, as for the variety of the defences by which it was encountered.

Some baffled their persecutors by patient fortitude. Serenus, a poor gardener at Sirmium,[35] on being

[33] "Carcer Christicolis gradus coronæ est;
Carcer provehit ad superna cœli;
Carcer conciliat Deum beatis."
PRUD., *Hymn. VI. Perist.* 25–27.

"Tormenta, carcer, ungulæ,
Stridensque flammis lamina,
Atque ipsa pœnarum ultima
Mors Christianis ludus est."
ID., *Hymn. V. Perist.* 61–64.

[34] So said Constantine the Emperor. *Πύση δὲ ἡ τῆς δυναστείας ἀλαζονεία τολμᾷν πολεμεῖν Θεῷ ὄντας ἀνθρώπους.* Orat. ad Sanct. Cœt., 25. See Zonaras also, XII. 31.

[35] The capital of the Cæsar Galerius.

apprehended, confessed himself a Christian. "Where, then, hast thou been hid," he was asked by the governor of the province, "that thou hast not yet been made to offer sacrifice?" "Hitherto," answered Serenus, "I have been a stone rejected from the building. But now the Lord requireth me for His temple, and I am ready to suffer."[36] A lady of noble birth, Julitta, fled with her boy from Iconium to Seleucia, and finding herself still in peril, she hurried farther on to Tarsus.[37] There seized and tortured, while her boy was murdered before her eyes, Julitta gave thanks to God for taking the child away before her, and for allowing her to follow him.[38] Amongst many martyrs at Gaza in Palestine, was one whom the historian calls the thrice blessed Paul. At his execution, he asked a moment's delay. Obtaining it, he prayed aloud, not for himself so much as for his brethren, nor for them so much as for his foes and theirs, their sovereigns, their judges and their executioners.[39] The liberty of the Christian could have had no truer triumph over the oppression of the Heathen.[40]

Many of the martyrs took a bolder tone. Tarachus of Isauria,[41] a veteran soldier, did not hesitate to call his judge a fool whose threats of cruelty

[36] Acta, ap. Ruinart, tom III. p. 154.

[37] All in the south of Asia Minor.

[38] Theodorus, ap. Ruinart, tom. III. p. 123.

[39] "O the great and the ineffable forbearance!" exclaims Eusebius, Mart. Palest., 8.

"But fixed to hold Love's banner fast,
And by submission win at last."
KEBLE.

[40] "Hic est verus triumphus quum dominatores dominantur." De Mort. Pers., 16.

[41] In Asia Minor.

could create no fear in Christian hearts.[42] Another Christian, by name Romanus, arrived at Antioch in season to witness a large number of his fellow-believers consenting to offer public sacrifice. The Heathen judge was laughing them to scorn. "But thou shalt not exult," cried out the new comer, "for God hath soldiers who are not to be overcome." Romanus fulfilled his pledge. Being apprehended, he met with undaunted mien the agonies of death.[43]

Still more impressive was the intrepidity of Apphianus, a youth of twenty, belonging to a Lycian family of the highest rank. Leaving his father's house for his faith's sake, he went to Cæsarea in Palestine. There he was pursuing his religious studies at the time when the persecution received a fresh impulse from imperial edicts repeating the orders that all should offer sacrifice. The proclamation had been read, and military officers were summoning the inhabitants of the city by name to obey the mandates of their sovereigns. Before one of the temples stood the governor in the act of setting an example of obedience, when Apphianus, darting out from the multitude of spectators, seized the governor's upraised hand. "Beware," he solemnly said, "nor desert the Only True God for the service of idols and evil spirits." He was of course seized, tortured, and murdered.[44] But the thrilling appeal which he had made must have lingered long in the

[42] Acta Tarachi, etc., 7, ap. Ruinart, tom. III. p. 35.

[43] Acta, ap. Ruinart, tom. II. pp. 329 *et seq.*

"Christi fortis assertor Dei."
PRUD., *Hymn. X. Perist.*, 1.

[44] Eus., Mart. Palest., 4.

memories of the Heathen as well as of the Christians at Cæsarea.

"Thus," exclaims the Christian historian, "the Christians, that is, they who were really such, far from abandoning the worship of the Universal God, not only rose superior to the menaces and chastisements of their oppressors, but likewise used greater freedom of speech than if they had not been oppressed. With noble and fearless tongue they spoke out freely, exhorting their very persecutors, if they could but be enlightened, to acknowledge the One True God."[45]

There were some so goaded as to cast off all bonds uniting them with their oppressors. A party passing through Cæsarea in Palestine were arrested as adherents of the prohibited religion. On being brought before their judge, they were subjected to the usual interrogatories and tortures. Not comprehending the scriptural names borne by them, the magistrate asked one of their number what was his province. The Christian answered, "Jerusalem." "What is it, and where?" inquired the judge. Not understanding the answer, he ordered the prisoner to be put to the rack. All that could be extorted was equally unintelligible. "It lies to the East," exclaimed the sufferer. "It is the city of those who fear God." The magistrate was greatly perplexed. It struck him, however, that the prisoner spoke of some place which the Christians were fortifying

[45] Eus., Mart. Palest., 4.

against the imperial power.[46] In the hope of discovering the clue to so monstrous a scheme, the examination was prolonged beyond the time ordinarily allotted to Christian trials. Blows and torments were used with every means that could be devised to worm the secret from the prisoners. But no further information could be obtained from them. They were finally sentenced to death as enemies rather than as subjects of the Empire.

It was with those who loved their enemies, with the martyrs who did not deny their fellow-subjects or defy their rulers, that the liberty of the Christians appeared preëminent. To die with frenzy, as it were, was less difficult than to die with serenity. To die in any manner was less difficult than to live. It was in life, especially amongst the oppressed, that the Christian powers would find their largest, their most frequent exercise. At the tribunal, on the rack, in the arena, the faith and the obedience of the sufferer were tried but for a season, sometimes but for a moment. The virtues of the believer were tested hourly and unceasingly so long as he lived.

While one portion of the Christians was braving the pains of death, another was toiling through the labors of life. They had their champions. Amidst the uproar in all directions, a few men, humble in attire, and bearing only some written scrolls, came forth to plead for justice. One of them, Arnobius, a rhetorician in Africa until his conversion, made use of his acquirements to defend his brethren.

[46] Ἐχθρὰν καὶ Ῥωμαίοις πολεμίαν πάντως που συστήσεσθαι πόλιν Χριστιανούς. Eus., Mart. Palest., 11.

Against the charge of seditiousness, the mainspring of the persecution, he argues in faithful earnestness. "Our first object," he writes, "is to put these questions, simply and calmly, to our pursuers. Hath anything occurred since the Christian religion received its name upon the earth, contrary to the usual course, or in violation of the laws instituted from the beginning? .... Do not they rule to whom fortune hath granted dominion? Are they not daily conferring dignities and powers, presiding over judicial decisions, interpreting statutes and laws? And do not all other things with which human life is provided or regulated continue amongst all men according to their races and their institutions?"[47]

Another defender appeared in the Italian Lactantius. At one time a pupil of Arnobius, he was afterwards called by Diocletian to officiate as a teacher of rhetoric at Nicomedia.[48] There, perhaps, he was converted. There, at all events, he was an indignant witness of the outbreak of the persecution. "I was present," he says, "and I lamented. ..... Stimulated by the proud impiety of the persecutors, and by my own consciousness of the truth, and, as I think, by God, I undertook this office of refuting our accusers to the utmost of my abilities."[49] The position taken by Lactantius is very daring. "Our foes are not so furious," he avers, "because their gods are neglected by us;

[47] Adv. Gent., I. 2. See, further, I. 14 and II. 63 *et seq.*

[48] Hier., Cat. Scr. Eccl., 80.

[49] "Suscepi hoc munus ut omnibus ingenii mei viribus accusatores justitiæ refutarem." Div. Inst., v. 4.

for they are neglected by many others besides ourselves. But it is because the truth is in our possession, that their hatred is excited against us."[50] To all the assaults, covert and secret, of the Heathen, he opposes resolute assurances of the victory which the Christians were destined to win.[51] Confidence in their cause, however, disposes him to no animosity against their oppressors. "For our faith is to be kept," he says, "not by slaying, but by dying; not by passion, but by patience; not by crime, but by fidelity. . . . . If by blood, by tortures, by evil, ye seek to defend religion, it will not be defended, but polluted and violated. Nothing is so much the creature of the will as religion."[52] But not the less warmly does he urge the Heathen to join the Christians before it should be too late. "I shall think," he writes, "that I have lived long enough, and that I have fulfilled the labor of a man, if my exertions shall have freed some fellow-beings from their errors, and directed them on their heavenward journey."[53] "The knowledge of God is the only true knowledge. His worship," concludes the Christian, "is the only true virtue."[54]

Meanwhile, there were many to prove themselves fitter for Heathen servitude than for Christian liberty. Some were silent. Others were submissive. The spirits that should have risen superior to the terrors of the dungeon or the tribunal sank. The

[50] "Sed quia veritas penes nos est, quæ, ut est verissime dictum, odium parit." Div. Inst., v. 21.

[51] Ib., v. 13, 22.

[52] "Nihil est enim tam voluntarium quam religio." Ib., v. 19.

[53] De Opif. Dei, 20.

[54] "Scientia est, Deum nosse; virtus, colere." Div. Inst., VI. 5.

voices that should have pleaded against the threats and the edicts of their persecutors were mute. The Christian, writing of the endurance which he had beheld, begins his narrative by announcing that he shall not enumerate those "who had been shaken or shipwrecked by the tempest." [55] We may imitate his example, remembering, however, that there were many who were faithless, in order to appreciate the nobleness of those who were faithful.

Amongst the martyrs of the period was the virgin Euphemia of Chalcedon on the Bosphorus. The spot where she had been entombed was afterwards marked by a church, in one of whose porticoes her martyrdom was depicted. On one side, writes a Christian Bishop who had seen the painting, sits enthroned the judge, looking down with harsh and threatening countenance upon the virgin. Beside him are magistrates, clerks and guards; one of the clerks appearing to conduct the examination. The virgin, fair of feature and with a modest and serene expression, stands arrayed in black. Her eyes are downcast as if she shunned the stare of the bystanders. Yet she shows no fear, neither does she seem to suffer from the trial of her faith. Two soldiers are in the act of thrusting her forward, one pulling her by the hand, the other pushing her from behind. Farther on are seen the executioners preparing to do the work of torture, which is also represented in the picture. "But I dissolve in tears," says the Christian, "and sympathy interrupts my

[55] Eus., VIII. 2.

speech." The prison likewise is represented. "There the virgin sits alone, still in dark garments, lifting both her hands to Heaven and invoking God to be her Helper." As she prays, a cross appears above her head. Then the scene changes. The flames are seen. "And in the midst of them is placed the virgin with hands stretched out towards Heaven, wearing no look of sadness, but rather rejoicing, as one departing to a spiritual and a blessed existence."[56] The picture of Euphemia is the picture of the Christian Church as it struggled for life or death.

The throne, of which the steps were thus flooded with blood, itself became an object of contention. In the second year of the persecution, that is, in the twenty-first or twenty-second of Diocletian's reign, he abdicated with Maximian. The retirement of the Emperors was by no means voluntary. Diocletian yielded to the wishes, if not the injunctions of his imperious son-in-law Galerius, by whom he was also obliged to prevail upon Maximian to accompany his retirement.[57] The places of the Emperors were taken by Galerius and Constantius; the latter continuing in the government of Britain, Gaul and Spain, while Galerius held virtual possession of the Central, Southern, and Eastern provinces. Italy and Africa were assigned to the Cæsar Severus, Egypt and Syria being placed under the superintendence of the Cæsar Maximinus Daza.[58] But as both the

[56] Asterius, ap. Ruinart, Acta Mart., tom. III. pp. 149 – 153.

[57] 305. De Mort. Pers., 18, 19.

[58] Both were Illyrians. Severus had long been in the service of Galerius. Maximinus, originally a herdsman, was Galerius's nephew. Aur. Vict., Epit., XL. 1. Eutr., X. 1, 2. Zos., II. 8.

Cæsars owed their elevation to Galerius, to whom they were bound by many ties of dependence, he was the lord of their realms as much as of his own. To be sure of deference from the Emperor Constantius, Galerius detained his son Constantinus[59] in service at the East.[60] In short, Galerius was determined to make himself sole sovereign in deed if not in name. Even the name was an object of desire, if we may trust the report that Galerius intended to change the Roman to the Dacian name throughout the Empire.[61]

The next year Constantius died in Britain, but his authority, instead of passing to his colleague, descended to his son Constantine.[62] Maximian, who had been exceedingly reluctant to abdicate with Diocletian, resumed his imperial pretensions under cover of movements that had resulted in the proclamation of his son Maxentius as Cæsar at Rome.[63] The number of sovereigns was thus increased to six.[64] Maximian and Maxentius assumed the administration of Italy and Africa. Severus,

[59] Whose name in full was Flavius Valerius Aurelius Claudius. "Une inscription lui donne le prénom de Marcus. Il tenait de son père les noms de Flavius Valerius ; les trois autres retraçaient la mémoire de Claude II." Le Beau, Hist. du Bas-Empire, tom. I. p. 26. Constantine was born about 274, at Naissus in Mœsia. Auct. Ign., De Const., 2.

[60] Constantine escaped only by successful stratagem. De Mort. Pers., 24. Zos., II. 8.

[61] De Mort. Pers., 27. "Se jam solum totius orbis dominum esse." Ib., 20.

[62] 306. Zos., II. 9. Eutr., X. 1. Eus., VIII. 13. Constantine was then thirty-two years of age. He married a daughter of Maximian in the same year.

[63] Chiefly by the Prætorians. "Eodem fere tempore castra quoque Prætoria sustulerat [Galerius.]" De Mort. Pers., 26. Eutr., X. 2. Zos., II. 9.

[64] Or seven, including a Phrygian, Alexander, who held Africa against Maxentius for two or three years. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XL. 17, 18. Zos., II. 12, 14.

lately declared Emperor, was sent by Galerius to recover these provinces; but he encountered defeat and death.[65] His place was immediately filled by Licinianus Licinius,[66] another dependent of Galerius. A second attack upon Maximian and his son, though directed by Galerius himself, was totally unsuccessful. On the other side stood Maximinus Daza demanding possession of authority over his provinces with the title of Emperor. To this likewise Galerius was obliged to yield.[67] In place of the whole which he had coveted, the vindictive Emperor retained but a sixth part of the Empire.[68]

The importance of Galerius in our narrative arises from the fact that he was the chief persecutor of the Christians. As he rose towards supremacy, their dangers increased. As he fell back into an inferior position, their sufferings were likely to decrease. Not only was Galerius losing control over his fellow-rulers; he was losing control over himself. Disease[69] and age were depriving him of the vigor that entered into the passions with which he had pursued the Christians. They said it was remorse that induced him to right them after having done them so great, so repeated wrong. Very probably it was from the conviction that he needed all the support to be had against his threatening colleagues. At all events, Galerius undertook to stay the persecution

[65] 307. Zos., II. 10. De Mort. Pers., 26.

[66] "Dacia oriundus." Eutr., X. 3. Zos., II. 11. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XL. 8.

[67] De Mort. Pers., 32. Eus., VIII. 13.

[68] De Mort. Pers., 27. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XL. 8, 9.

[69] But probably exaggerated in Eus., VIII. 16; De Mort. Pers., 33.

of the Christians. Eight years had elapsed since his first blows against them at Nicomedia.[70]

A decree appeared bearing the name and titles of the Emperor Galerius. It declared that the former edicts had been issued not against the Christians as such, but against those of their number by whom the principles of their religion had been violated. "It is our first object," declares the Emperor, "in carrying out our schemes for the advantage and amelioration of our subjects, to secure the conformity of all to the ancient law and the common standard of Romans. And for this it is required that the Christians who have left the faith of their fathers should return to the right way..... Although we have seen the service of the immortal gods as well as that of the Christians' God neglected, ... yet we have thought proper to concede indulgence towards the erring Christians, in order that they may be preserved,[71] and may recover the buildings wherein they were wont to assemble, provided that they do nothing contrary to their own standard."[72] The edict commands them to return "to supplicate their God for the safety of the Emperor and of his subjects as well as for their own preservation." No such recantation had ever been made by the imperial power. The Christians were not only relieved; they were acknowledged as a class entitled to adopt a

[70] Now, therefore, 311. Respites in the persecution are mentioned by Eusebius, IX. 1, and De Mart. Palest., 4, 9.

[71] "Ἵνα αὖθις ὦσι Χριστιανοί. Ap. Eus., VIII. 17.

[72] "Ὥστε μηδὲν ὑπεναντίον τῇς ἐπιστήμης αὐτοὺς πράττειν. Ib, ib. "Ita ut ne quid contra disciplinam agant." De Mort. Pers., 34.

new faith, and to live according to the new laws which their faith embraced. The single condition imposed upon them was obedience to their own institutions.

The Christians could not have been more amazed than the Heathen. The most lawless of their rulers was commanding the restoration of the ancient laws. The most cruel of their sovereigns was prohibiting the cruelties from which the Christians had suffered at his own instigation. Yet there were reasons enough to urge the cessation of hostilities between the Heathen and the Christians. The latter were not the only sufferers of the period. Nor was persecution the only cause of suffering. Italy had been devastated in the war between Galerius and his opponents, Maximian and Maxentius.[73] Still more recently, Carthage had been plundered and fired.[74] Other cities and other provinces were as fearfully afflicted by famine, disease and various trials.[75] In such circumstances, the stoppage of persecution was a relief to the Heathen as well as to the Christians.

Yet so fierce had been the passions excited amongst the Heathen that they resumed their work of torture and of carnage at the first summons which they received. Maximinus Daza had been found by Galerius in more than one instance to be ungovernable. All that he did in obedience to the edict in behalf of the Christians was to interrupt their persecution. As if to make himself amends even for the momentary suspension of the

[73] De Mort. Pers., 27.
[74] Aur Vict., Cæs., xl. 19.
[75] De Mort. Pers., 23, 31, 37. Eus., viii. 15, ix, 8, 9.

barbarities in which his brutal nature delighted, Maximin issued orders reinstating the Heathen religion in its ancient supremacy. Wild rose the cry against the Christians of his realms in Syria and Egypt.[76] It spread through all the Asiatic provinces, which Maximin seized upon the death of Galerius soon afterwards. Nor would the European provinces, which Licinius took to himself, oppose any obstacle to the renewal of the persecution.[77] The year in which the edict of Galerius was issued had not yet expired.

Meanwhile Constantine, the Emperor of Britain, Gaul and Spain, had been obliged to defend himself against the intrigues of the Roman sovereigns, Maximian and Maxentius. Although he was able to rid himself of the elder Emperor,[78] the younger continued hostilities. These daily became more alarming. Marching at length against Maxentius, Constantine defeated him in battle near the walls of Rome.[79] The Emperor Licinius hastened to pay his court to the conqueror, whose half-sister Constantia he received in marriage. The third surviving sovereign, Maximin Daza, took advantage of Licinius's absence to invade his territories. But the star of Constantine was in the ascendant, and the Emperor whom he had made his brother-in-law soon put to rout the

[76] Eus., IX. 1-5, 7-9, Mart. Palest., 9. De Mort. Pers., 36–38.

[77] Ib., ib. Aur. Vict., Epit., XL. 18.

[78] He was obliged by Constantine to put himself to death at Marseilles in 310. De Mort. Pers., 28 *et seq.* Zos., II. 10.

[79] 312. Zos., II. 14 *et seq.* On his tyranny and that of Maximin see the contemporary account in Eus., VIII. 14, and Vit. Const., I. 33 *et seq.*

Emperor who had scorned their alliance.[80] Licinius obtained possession of the Eastern provinces, while the Western remained under the sway of Constantine. He had completed his triumph by the humiliation of the Senate[81] and the dissolution of the Prætorians.[82]

The fate of the Christians depended upon the will of Constantine. Had he been less wayward or less imperious in character, the question of life or death with them would have been already decided. They had never been so hardly pressed in the provinces of Constantine and his father as in the other divisions of the Empire. Nor had they elsewhere attracted so much regard from their sovereigns. The contentions of both the father and the son with their colleagues had rendered the support of the Christians essential. Nor could such as Constantius and Constantine have denied respect to a faith for which the brave and the timid, the fair woman and the stalwart soldier, the substantial citizen and the tottering mendicant were alike content to die. Motives of interest and of generous regard had thus combined in influencing Constantine before his march against Maxentius. As he proceeded towards Italy, visions of the Cross and of armed hosts were believed to have appeared in the heavens above him. Voices by night were reported to have uttered words of encouragement as he rested by the way.[83]

[80] He slew himself in 314. Eus., IX. 11. Zos., II. 17.

[81] Aur. Vict., Cæs., XL. 24. The Senate, however, declared him first of the Emperors, and built his arch.

[82] Zos., II. 17. Aur. Vict., Cæs., XL. 25.

[83] De Mort. Pers., 44. Eus., IX.

Less mysterious promises may have been made of Christian recruits prepared to infuse their experience or their devotion into the barbarian levies whereof the imperial army was chiefly composed.[84] Without committing himself, Constantine found many Christians to do battle for him, while his victory was hailed with exultation by many more. It seemed as if he could not do less than to save them from their persecutors.

It was by degrees, however, that he reached the determination to interpose in behalf of the Christians. For the moment, he was more occupied with himself than with them. Far from embracing their faith, he was maintaining the observance of the Heathen religion, of whose priesthood he assumed the head as the Chief Pontiff.[85] After a time, an edict, of which the terms have not been preserved, appeared granting permission to the Christians to reassemble in their churches.[86] It was not until Licinius and Constantine met at Milan, some months subsequently, that a second edict was published in their name. "We have long since been convinced," it begins, "that liberty of worship should not be prohibited, but that it should be within the power of each individual to discharge all sacred offices according to his own choice and form. . . . . Where-

9, and Vit. Const., I. 28, 29. See the Excursus of Heinichen on the latter passage, pp. 507 *et seq.*, ed. 1830.

[84] Zos., II. 15.

[85] The good Tillemont cannot bear the idea. Hist. des Emp., tom. v. p. 139.

[86] Eus., IX. 9 ad fin. Also, X. v. The edict is said to have been issued by Constantine and Licinius, who then despatched it to Maximin Daza.

fore I, Constantine the Emperor, and I, Licinius the Emperor, ... do now grant to the Christians, and to all, the liberty of following the worship which they may prefer, in order that whatsoever divinity exists may be propitious to us and to all who live under our authority." [87] The ordinance proceeds to remove the restrictions imposed by the previous ordinance of the same sovereigns. "All exceptions against the Christians are wholly removed..... And now each one of them may freely and uninterruptedly observe the Christian worship without any hindrance." [88] The edict concludes by ordering that the churches and other public possessions of the Christians should be restored to them without payment and without delay.

Thus ended the persecution. The struggle of life and death for the Christians was decided in their favor. "Nor did we ever achieve a greater victory," exclaims one of a later generation, "than when we proved ourselves incapable of being vanquished by the slaughters of ten years." [89] "Better, indeed, than we could have expected," exclaims the rejoicing Christian at the time, "are the things which we have acquired!" [90] "All suddenly," he again cries out with breathless eagerness, "like lights that flash amid utter darkness, the churches were opened

[87] Ap. Eus., x. 5; or De Mort. Pers., 48. This was issued in 313.

[88] *Καὶ νῦν ἐλευθέρως τε καὶ ἁπλανῶς ἕκαστος τῶν τὴν αὐτὴν προαίρεσιν ἐσχηκότων τοῦ φυλάττειν τὴν τῶν Χριστιανῶν θρησκείαν ἄνευ τινὸς ὀχλήσεως τοῦτο αὐτὸ παραφυλάττοι.* Ap. Eus., x. 5. Diocletian lived just long enough to witness the issue of the struggle which he had commanded. He died in 313, at the age of 67 or 68. Aur. Vict., Epit., xxxix. 7.

[89] Sulp. Severus, ii. 47.

[90] Eus., x. 1.

and filled with our gatherings as of old..... And the brave champions of our faith, set free from sufferings and exiles, proceeded homewards, exulting, and with a cheerfulness which it is not possible for language to express. And so, along the highroads and through the streets, they made their way, singing the while to God in hymns and psalms. The same men who had been driven out in chains from their homes might now be seen returning with gay and joyous faces to their hearth-stones."[91] "The Church," declares another Christian writer, "that had been lately trampled on, riseth again."[92]

The memory of those to whom, under God, the resurrection could be ascribed was not forgotten. "And here there were two arrays," says the preacher of the next century, "the one of martyrs and the other of tyrants. The tyrants were armed; but the martyrs fought with naked limbs. Yet the victory was gained by the naked, not by the armed. Who would not be astonished that the scourged should thus prevail against the scourger, the bound against the unbound, the burned against the burner, the dying against the slayer!.... The victory hath come from the grace of God."[93]

[91] Eus., IX. 1. The description belongs to the year when the edict of Galerius was issued.

[92] De Mort. Pers., 1.

[93] Chrysost., Hom. 74 De Mart., cited by Bingham, Christ. Ant., Book XX. ch. VIII. § 14, note *o*.

CHAPTER XI.

A TURNING-POINT.

"Servitium solvit miserabile Constantinus." — PRUDENTIUS.

THE Christians had not merely recovered their former ground. Had this been all which they gained, they might soon have been assailed anew. But they had attained to a position of comparative security. They stood where they would not easily be reached by their enemies. Without having actually overcome their persecutors, they had so resisted them as to achieve a positive triumph. They had raised themselves above the level which they occupied of old. It was a turning-point in their destiny.

Behind lay the rude expanse over which the martyrs had struggled forward. It might be that their line was not yet terminated. It might be that the terrors of their way were not yet surmounted. But the prospect was changing. If it had its yawning ravines or its impending crags, it was overspread with scenes of fairer promise. The whole region

wore a different look from that of the country hitherto traversed. It was a land of abounding visions, upon which the Christians were entering.

They could not tarry to doubt or to reason. Yet it was a time to do both. In those days of relief, of exultation, of hope, the Christians were leaving much which they could not readily regain, even as they were entering upon much from which they could not readily retire. It was a season of danger, rather than of success. All that they esteemed most precious would be tried. Nor would their liberty escape its ordeal. What this ordeal was, it behoves us to inquire.

Christian liberty, it will be remembered, was the liberty of the subject. It was not denied to the ruler. But it was always more consistent with subjection than with authority. The possession of power seemed to alienate the minds of the powerful from the liberty which belonged to all beneath them as much as to themselves. On the contrary, a position of dependence appeared to attach the dependent to the liberty which no superior could restrain, which but few superiors possessed. Such a liberty throve in adversity. Oppression from without rendered the freedom within more entire, more secure. But it was a liberty that would rather dwindle in prosperity. Favored and protected by the ruling orders, it would waver, diminish, perhaps disappear. The subject classes themselves might cease to cherish it when it was nominally cherished for them. All this must be marked, if we would understand how the attachment to the liberty of the Christians might be about to decline.

Nor is this all. The decline of attachment towards the liberty of the subject was not so menacing as the increasing disability to attain to it in prosperous times. At such seasons, many a subject would rise to the rank of a ruler. Others left beneath him might have a similar desire as well as a similar opportunity to rise. At all events, there would be a growing disposition to throw off inferiority and assume superiority. The powers to be exercised by the subject would no longer be cultivated so seduously as those to be exercised by the ruler. More than this. The subject who should essay to exercise his powers would find himself hindered. His aspirations were likely to interfere with the prerogatives of those above him. Then he must be repressed. He must be prevented from using the liberty with which he was threatening the authority of his rulers. His disability to attain to freedom was involuntary. That of the subject who preferred a higher place may be called voluntary. In either case, the number of those deprived of the liberty belonging to the subject would be sadly enlarged.

Such was the ordeal through which the liberty of the Christians was on the eve of passing. Already were they busy in extricating themselves from the responsibilities of subjects. Already were some amongst them assuming the prerogatives of rulers. It was a process, so to speak, that had begun before the recent persecution. Arrested while the persecution continued, it was more than proportionally quickened when persecution gave way to tolerance and to favor. But one word, as it were, was needed

from the powerful to turn the Christians from subjects into disputants, intriguers, and actual rulers.

The word soon came. "The bounties which we had received from God," exclaims the contemporary historian, "were confirmed by successive edicts from the Emperors. Indeed, they were extended farther and farther. Letters from the Emperor to the Bishops, honors and gifts of money were the order of the day."[1] The Emperor referred to was Constantine. His interposition in behalf of the Christians had been followed by continued consideration towards them.

"Whereas it appeareth," wrote Constantine to his Proconsul in Africa, "and in many ways, that when the Christian religion was neglected, great calamities befel our realms, and that the same religion, when duly supported and observed, contributed to the greatest advancement of the Roman name as well as of all Roman concerns, ... we have determined that the men who devote themselves to the dignity of this religion shall receive the recompense of their services. Wherefore let all belonging to the Catholic Church within the province committed to thee, who give their labors to this holy religion, let all, that is, who are usually called the clergy be held entirely exempt from all public duties. This is my pleasure in order that they may not be drawn off by any error or obliquity from the worship due to their Divinity, but that they may rather keep themselves under their peculiar law without being

[1] Eus., x. 2.

annoyed by claims for service. In thus fulfilling their obligations to their Deity, they will confer the utmost possible good upon the public interests."[2] "I have received and adored the celestial letter from your Majesty," replied the Proconsul. "And I have communicated your will to those who are called the clergy. I have exhorted them, inasmuch as they appear to be relieved from all public burdens by your Majesty's indulgence, that they should devote themselves to divine affairs, with proper reverence and entire obedience to the law."[3]

The immunity thus conveyed to the Christian clergy was already enjoyed by the priests of other religions existing under the imperial laws. Constantine's letter, therefore, need not have excited the Christians to imagine that he regarded their leaders as superior to those of the Heathen or of the Jews.[4] But the effect of his declaration upon the Christians, especially upon the Catholics, was certain to be immense.[5] To see their clergy placed on a level with the ancient priesthoods was sufficient to assure them that their priesthood would soon become the highest.

No longer would the Christians, much more the Catholic Christians, be contented with the liberty of

[2] Ap. Eus., x. 7. Date, 313.

[3] Ap. August., Ep. 68, cited in Heinichen's notes to Eus., ut ante.

[4] The immunities of the Heathen priesthood are in Cod. Theod., lib. XII. tit. I. 75, tit. IV. 2. Those of the Jewish "Patriarchs or Presbyters," "the Priests, the Rulers and the Fathers of the Synagogues, with the rest who serve in the Synagogues," are in Ib., lib. XVI. tit. VIII. 2 – 4.

[5] If the ordinance in the Code exempting the Ecclesiæ Catholicæ from taxation belongs to this time, the immunity accorded to the Catholics may have appeared more like a distinction than has been represented. See Cod. Theod., lib. XI. tit. I. 1, with the notes of Godefroy and Hänel.

the subject. The liberty of the ruler was within their grasp. What matter that it issued from a human law? What matter that the liberty of the subject proceeded from the Divine law? Were the Christians forbidden to rule? Were they forbidden to profit by the support of human statutes? If they were, it would have been reasonable to argue, they had better give themselves up at once to their persecutors. Their liberty, they might urge, could never receive expansion, were they to remain forever in subjection.

Here, if they thus reasoned, here was their error. It was not necessary to remain in subjection. It was not necessary to reject the aid proffered by human statutes. But it was essential to make the Divine law, rather than any human one, the source of liberty. It was essential that liberty should remain the right of the subject, rather than of the ruler. The Christians who esteemed the liberty of the latter to be above that of the former were sorely deceived. For in so doing, they were attributing to a law of their sovereign on earth a liberty superior to that which came from their Sovereign in Heaven.

This was the turning-point in the destiny of the Roman Christians. The liberty in prospect is not the liberty of the subject. The result to which it leads is not the union which the Christians were called to prepare.

CHAPTER XII.

DEPENDENCE ON THE SOVEREIGN.

"Constantinum omnes intuebantur."—*De Mort. Pers.*, 19.

The change in the Christians' course was soon perceptible. Instead of guiding themselves by the upper constellations which they had hitherto obeyed, they were watching the lower luminaries. Once it was their faith alone that they consulted. Now, it was what they would call their interest. Of yore, they had known no other subjection than that which they owed to their Deity. At present, they were bending lower and lower before their earthly rulers. Directed by so different observations, the Christians could not but veer towards different points from those which they had hitherto pursued.

To no other cause were these alterations so evidently ascribable as to the dependence of the Christians upon their sovereign. To depend upon him was not only to obey him. Obedience had always been rendered by the Christians to the authority above them. But they had contended against mere dependence. They had kept themselves from utter

subjection. However much they acknowledged themselves subjects or dependents, there had always been a reservation in favor of their rights, their liberties. They would still have the freedom to be all that Christians could be. They would still retain the right to all that Christians could claim. Of this there might be no open renunciation at the present period. But it was clear that the Christians were sinking into dependence. It was equally clear that the consequences of their dependence were giving a new aspect to their position and to their destiny.

One thing, however, is not to be denied. It cannot but be allowed that this dependence upon the sovereign was natural in the circumstances. The reigning Emperor was a man to command especial reverence from his subjects, and particularly from his Christian subjects. These, as has been related, he had delivered from their persecutors. To these, as will be narrated, he was attaching himself not only as a protector but as a sympathizer, nay, a fellow-believer. At the same time the Christians themselves were never so much in want of an arm to restrain as well as to lead them. They had passed through the agonies of persecution with far less peril than now attended them in the intrigues and the strifes of prosperity. It seemed as if their only safety was to lean upon a master.

Dissensions were rife on all sides. The spirit that had led to controversies in the season of oppression would break out with still more angry demonstrations in the season of apparent liberation. It was as if sunshine were inflaming more than had been

aroused amidst darknesses and storms. The views opening before the Christians would inevitably conduce to fresh divisions. The advocates of one policy in the Church would differ from those of another. Those who strove less for the Church than for themselves would form a host of more and more exasperated opponents. The ambitious would clash with the covetous. The partisans of what was old would wrangle with the partisans of what was new. The active were taking one way; the indolent preferred another. The servants of opposite or even of different passions were arrayed on opposite sides. Such as were maintaining their serenity in the midst of the turbulent, such as were preserving their fidelity in the midst of the faithless, could not but form parties of their own. Altercations spread. Contentions raged. It was not strange that the Christians felt the need of control, though it were at the risk of dependence on the sovereign.

Nowhere were the signs more threatening than amongst the African Christians. Various as were their races, they were allied by a blood that was always burning with excitement. Towards the east, the Egyptian communities were in flames.[1] Not the same fire, but one kindled from the same sort of materials, was raging at Carthage towards the west. We need not now repair to both these scenes of conflagration. It will be enough to watch the glare that rose at Carthage.

[1] For contemporary proofs of which, see Episc. Ægypt., Ep. ad Melet., ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 91 *et seq.*, or Petri Canon, ap. Id., ib., pp. 23 *et seq.* The Meletian schism will be again referred to.

The see of Carthage, to which the neighboring dioceses sustained a certain relation of inferiority, became vacant in the full glow of controversy as well as of persecution. The choice of the convention assembled to fill the vacancy fell on Cæcilianus, a Deacon of the Church at Carthage. To the great disappointment and the still greater indignation of numerous competitors and adversaries, the Deacon was ordained the head of the Carthaginian see. He had been implicated in a charge brought against his predecessor for having obeyed the imperial edicts by surrendering the Scriptures and the consecrated appurtenances of the Christian service.[2] To this accusation, was added another complaint more particularly directed against Cæcilianus. He was said to have prevented the Carthaginian Christians from obtaining access to the victims of the persecution.[3] A graver imputation upon the truth of a Christian priest could not have been laid.

A council of prelates who had taken no part in the election of Cæcilianus was called. It was quickly filled with men intent upon violent proceedings. The allegations against the new Bishop not being satisfactorily answered, his ordination was declared invalid. His place was then conferred upon a certain Majorinus, whose election, it was said amongst his antagonists, resulted from the influence of gold and

[2] The name of Traditor, Traitor or Deliverer, was applied to such. Gesta ap. Zenophil., ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. p. 322. August., Brev. Coll. cum Donat., III. 25.

[3] Gesta Purgationis Felicis, ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 287 *et seq.*

female intrigue.[4] One thing, at all events, is plain. The passions of the African Christians must have reached a fearful height before either Cæcilianus or Majorinus could have been elected as they were. Majorinus's ordination was the beginning of the famous schism which took its name of Donatist from the leading prelate of the second council, Donatus, Bishop of Casæ Nigræ in Numidia.[5]

Like the earlier schism under Novatian at Rome, the movement of Donatus and his partisans at Carthage was excited by what they conceived to be a twofold violation of Christian justice. They saw in Cæcilianus not only a man who had been elevated to the bishopric despite his unfaithfulness in the hour of trial, but one who was now making use of his authority to justify all falterers like himself. No such prerogative, argued the Donatists, shall be attached to the episcopal office. Least of all, they urged more vehemently, shall such a prerogative be exercised by one who hath himself transgressed in the manner of those whom he presumeth to pardon. If sincere in these positions, the Donatists were in one sense the champions of Christian liberty. But whether sincere or insincere, they were in another sense undoubtedly the adversaries of Christian liberty. Had their principles prevailed, too many believers of all classes and of all ages would have fallen a sacrifice to the rigid illiberality that denied forgiveness to the slightest act of submission under the imperial oppression.

[4] Optatus, De Schism. Donat., I. 16, 19. Gesta ap. Zenoph., ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 325, 332, 334.

[5] August., Brev. Coll. cum Donat., III. 24.

Controversy was running high, when the order of Constantine concerning the restitution of property belonging to the Catholic Christians arrived in Africa. The Proconsul to whom the order was addressed found himself beset by two parties, each declaring itself the only Catholic body in the province. To decide between these conflicting claims was not so difficult for the Proconsul as it appears. The name of the Donatists, applied to them by their adversaries, had been borne too long and too fiercely to be dropped or to be reconciled with the Catholic name in the judgment of the Proconsul. He therefore gave his decision in favor of their adversaries. A missive came from the Emperor recognizing Cæcilianus as the lawful Bishop of Carthage, and granting a large indemnity to that prelate. "And as I have learned," writes Constantine, "that there are certain individuals of unsettled opinions who are desirous of leading astray the people from the Holy and the Catholic Church, learn that I have given orders to the Proconsul and to the Vicar of the Præfects as follows. Namely, that they should pay the proper attention to this amongst all other things, and not allow it on any account to be neglected. Wherefore, if thou perceivest any of these individuals continuing in this madness, take thy way instantly to the aforesaid judges, and lay the matter before them, in order that they may give heed to the offenders as I have commanded."[6] The decree already cited concerning the immunities of the Catholic clergy was published shortly afterwards. It

[6] Ap. Eus., x. 6.

designates Cæcilianus as the head of the African clergy upon whom alone the immunities were conferred.[7]

The natural effect of these measures was to aggravate the contentions of the African Christians. Recrimination was excited on both sides. The Catholics taunted their adversaries with the sentence passed upon them by their sovereign. As bitterly did the Donatists retort upon the pitiable dependence to which their opponents stooped in gathering up the imperial bounties. It was not long, however, that the Donatists could maintain their attitude of independence. Once that the authority of the Emperor was introduced into the strife, both parties sought to have it upon their side. The Donatists appealed through the Proconsul to the Emperor. Without requesting him to pronounce judgment in person, they supplicated the convocation of a council to be composed of prelates from Gaul as from a province that had escaped the late dissensions.[8]

Thereupon, Constantine appears to have addressed the Bishop of Rome.[9] "Sundry communications," he remarks, "have been directed to me by the most illustrious Proconsul of Africa, showing that Cæcilianus, the Bishop of the Carthaginians, hath been accused of many things by certain of his African colleagues. This seemeth to me exceeding vexatious, that, in these realms placed under my allegiance by the Divine Providence, and inhabited by great mul-

[7] Ap. Eus., x. 7.

[8] Anulinus, Relat. ap. August., Ep. 88. Opt., De Schism. Don., i. 22.

[9] *Καὶ Μάρχῳ.* Ap. Eus., x. 5.

titudes, the inhabitants should appear to be rent in twain, while their Bishops are busy with dissensions. I have determined, therefore, that the aforesaid Cæcilianus, with ten Bishops prepared to prosecute him, and ten others whom he may select as assistants in his defence, shall sail to Rome. There you, as well as your colleagues Retecius, Maternus and Marinus, whom I have commanded to hasten to Rome for the purpose, will present your own statements as ye shall consider most at harmony with your very venerable law. That ye may have the most complete knowledge of all these things, I have appended to my epistles copies of the communications received from the Proconsul; and these I have sent to your above-named colleagues. With these in your possession, your firmness will decide the necessary manner of most carefully and most justly deciding the aforesaid cause. It cannot escape your penetration that I have so great a regard to the legitimate Catholic Church as to desire that you should nowhere allow any schism or division of your body. May the Divinity of the Great God preserve you, O most excellent man, for many years!"[10]

Far more extraordinary than any directions hitherto addressed to the Christians were these commands of Constantine. The imperial supremacy had never been so plainly asserted not only in the civil, but in the ecclesiastical relations of the Christians. Nor could its assertion at this time be ascribed to any other agency than their own. It is ye, the Catho-

[10] Ap. Eus., x. 5.

lics would say to the Donatists, who have drawn this upon yourselves by your appeal to the Emperor! It is ye, the Donatists would retort, who have drawn it upon us all by forcing us to make an appeal!

The summons of Constantine was obeyed by nineteen Bishops, only three of whom belonged to Gallic dioceses. The others were Italians introduced by the Bishop of Rome.[11] Assembling there, they met the leaders of the African disputants whose claims were severally urged with all the earnestness inspired by their long contentions. The epistles of the Emperor may have proved of greater weight than the statements of the parties before the council. At all events, sentence was pronounced in conformity with the decisions already made by Constantine. Cæcilianus was declared the lawful Bishop of Carthage. His competitor Majorinus was deposed, while Donatus, the head of the movement in which Majorinus had been but an instrument, was excommunicated.[12] Both he and his antagonist Cæcilianus seem to have been for some time detained in Italy at the command of the Emperor.[13]

But the African dissensions were far from being allayed. On the contrary, the appeal which Donatus and his adherents had already made to the Emperor was formally renewed. "We asked," they probably wrote, "for judgment at the hands of Bishops belonging to Gaul. But we have been con-

[11] Opt., De Schism. Don., I. 22. August., Ep. 185.

[12] Optatus and Augustine, ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 280–285. The council was held in the year 313.

[13] Opt., De Schism. Don., I. 26.

demned by prelates committed beforehand to the cause of our adversaries. We beseech your Majesty to do us justice." The appeal was not slighted. A new council was called to meet where the appellants desired, at Arles in Gaul. Permission of returning to Carthage was granted to Donatus, who was speedily followed by Cæcilianus. At the same time, an order was directed to the Proconsul of Africa, enjoining an investigation into the character of the prelate by whom Cæcilianus had been ordained.[14] This was Felix, Bishop of Aptungis, whom his opponents accused of having delivered up the Scriptures in his possession during the still recent persecution. Could the charge be proved, it would go far towards reversing the decision of the Roman Council from which the Donatists had appealed.

Agreeably to the injunctions of the Emperor, an inquiry into the conduct of the Bishop of Aptungis was immediately instituted before the imperial functionaries at Carthage. The proceedings appear to have been opened by the advocate of the Donatist appellants. "I speak," he said, "in the name of the Presbyters of the Christians of the Catholic party. Their cause is to be pleaded before their most glorious rulers against Cæcilianus and Felix, who are attempting to usurp the rights of the aforesaid party. Proofs of the crimes committed by Felix are to be brought forward." He then produced a letter purporting to have been written by the Duumvir of Aptungis to the Bishop, and alluding to the surrender

[14] All from Opt., De Schism. Don., I. 25–27.

of the Scriptures by the latter. The Duumvir, however, on being interrogated, declared that the allusion to the delivery of the Scriptures had been added to his letter by another hand. When the edicts against the Christians, he testified, arrived at Aptungis, he had given directions concerning the delivery of the Scriptures; but on sending after the Bishop, that personage could not be found.

Ingentius was the next witness. As a Decurio in one of the African towns, he was a Christian of considerable distinction. His testimony went against the Bishop of Aptungis, amongst whose adversaries the Decurio may have held a conspicuous place. But his evidence against the prelate was met by much more decisive evidence to his own discredit. He finally confessed himself the writer of the passage in the Duumvir's letter on which the prosecutors relied for proof of the defendant's guilt. The Proconsul immediately pronounced judgment. "It is manifest that Ingentius hath added much to the letter. Let him, therefore, be committed to prison. . . . . But it is plain that the pious Bishop Felix is free from the charge of destroying the sacred volumes."[15] "And let it be plain," wrote Constantine soon afterwards, "how they are baffled who have sought to excite odium against the Bishop Cæcilianus and to resist his authority. So let it be, in order that contentions of this nature may be put to rest, while the people observe their own religions with the proper reverence."[16]

[15] Gesta Purg. Felicis, ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 286–294.

[16] Ap. August., Ep. 88, or Routh, as above, p. 294.

These were strange scenes for the Christians to be passing through. It was singular enough for them to be bringing their controversies before the imperial tribunals. To support their pleas by crimes from which every honorable Heathen would have shrunk, was not only singular, but confounding. The Catholics, the whole body of Christians, had reason to upbraid the Donatists for what had been attempted against Felix of Aptungis. Nor could the Donatists recriminate. But all, the Christians, the Catholics, the Donatists, were alike in this, that they were more and more rapidly sinking into dependence on the sovereign.

Meantime the preparations for the council at Arles went forward. "For since I see," writes the Emperor to his Proconsul in Africa, "that these things are leading to much too obstinate dissensions, and that they cannot be decided in any other way, I have determined that Cæcilianus and three of the party opposed to him shall proceed to the city of Arles. And you are hereby instructed to provide free transport for Cæcilianus with those whom he shall select to accompany him as well as for those who go against him. Delegates of both parties are to be taken from others of the African districts; while free passage is to be furnished to all through Africa, Mauretania and Spain. You are also to send written directions to each of the Bishops that they may arrive in season at the appointed place. At the same time, you are to intimate to them the necessity of taking measures before their departure with regard to the preservation of discipline during

their absence, and let them see to it, that no sedition or disgraceful altercation arises amongst their people."[17] That the Roman Emperor should have had to give such orders to his Christian subjects!

A letter from Constantine to Chrestus, Bishop of Syracuse, is couched in the same tone. "It hath come to pass," writes the Emperor, "that those very men who should observe a fraternal and concordant unanimity are shamefully, or rather wickedly estranged one from another. By which they afford an opportunity of derision to those whose minds are ill disposed towards their most holy religion. It hath therefore been a matter of anxious concern with me to resolve how this that should have been quieted after the first judgment was rendered, might now be ended by the decision of a larger body. We have directed," the sovereign continues, "a great number of Bishops from various and numberless places to meet at the city of Arles, and we have thought it proper to write to you," the Bishop of Syracuse, "that you might obtain a conveyance at the public cost from the most illustrious governor of your island. Thence you will set out with two of your clergy belonging to the second rank, accompanied, likewise, by three servants who can minister to your wants upon the road. Thus, by means of your influence as well as by the unanimous wisdom of all who shall assemble, this schism, continuing until this time, amidst the most disgraceful controversies, may be repaired by hearing all parties to it. And so," con-

[17] Ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. pp. 297 – 299.

cludes the Emperor, "things may be brought back, however slowly, to the proper form and faith, as well as to the brotherly concord which ought to exist amongst you."[18]

Upwards of thirty Bishops, with a somewhat larger number of the inferior clergy, from all parts of the Western provinces, assembled at Arles.[19] Cæcilianus was present. His antagonists were fully represented.[20] To their conflicting statements an impartial hearing may have been given. But the decision of a council appointed and instructed by the sovereign could not be doubtful. The sentence pronounced the year before at Rome against the Donatists was solemnly reiterated.

"Concerning those who falsely accuse their brethren," ran one of the canons adopted by the council, "it is our pleasure that they be excommunicated."[21] Another canon declared that such "could be received into communion in no other place than that in which they had been suspended."[22] Both these ordinances were levelled against the Donatists as well as against all who might afterwards engage in controversy with the Catholics. To prove their convictions or their assumptions concerning the innocence of Cæcilianus in relation to the charges adduced against him, the Catholic prelates put forth another canon. In this "every one found guilty of having given up the

[18] Ap. Eus., x. 5.

[19] 314. The names are appended to the canons adopted by the council. Ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. iv. pp. 312–314.

[20] Augustine, cited by Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. vi. p. 48.

[21] Concil. Arelat., can. 14, ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. iv. pp 307–311.

[22] Conc. Arel., can. 16.

Scriptures, or the plate, or the names of their brethren," was sentenced to be "deposed from the clergy." But as if some lingering doubt respecting the conduct of the Bishop who had ordained Cæcilianus could not yet be removed, the council proceeded to direct that the ordinations held by such prelates were not to be rendered invalid by their subsequent deposition. "Nor are men to be admitted as accusers in similar cases," concludes the canon, "unless they can produce undoubted proofs."[23] At the same time it was enjoined that "no one Bishop was to presume upon ordaining a Bishop except with the assistance of seven other Bishops. Or if seven could not be obtained, then no less than three were to proceed with an ordination."[24]

The attention of the council was not confined to the settlement of the Donatist controversy. Breaking out, as that had undoubtedly appeared to do, from the earlier dissensions in the African province, its repression could not be made complete without reference to the questions of the past. The differences that had prevailed with regard to the baptism of converts from the Heretical parties, gave rise to a canon directing when the convert should and when he should not be baptized.[25] With similar views a canon was framed concerning the celebration of the Easter festival, "in order that it may be observed by us throughout the world on the same day and at the same time."[26]

"United in the common bond of charity and in

[23] Conc. Arel., can. 13.
[24] Ib., can. 20.
[25] Ib., can. 8.
[26] Ib., can. 1.

the unity of our mother church," wrote the members of the council to their colleague of Rome, "we who have been called to Arles by the pleasure of our most pious sovereign, salute thee. We have been dealing with individuals of unbridled mind, hostile and pernicious to our law and to our tradition. The authority of our God as well as the standard of truth is so entirely opposed to these men that they have no force in speaking, no method or success in accusing. Judged by God and our mother church who knoweth and proveth her children, these parties have been either condemned or baffled. Would that thou, O most beloved brother, couldst have been present to behold so wonderful a spectacle!"[27] It seems as if the Catholic leaders had not been content with submission to the Emperor. They must likewise throw themselves upon the authority of a ruler of their own.

But the dependence upon the sovereign was in no wise lessened. The decision of the council at Arles was immediately transmitted to Constantine. He who had convoked the council was understood to retain the power of ratifying or of annulling the proceedings of the victorious party.

The vanquished party was equally ready in proving its dependence. The messenger of the Catholics was speedily followed by another from the Donatists. The hope of the latter for justice from the Gallic council had been as rudely disappointed as their claim preferred before the council at Rome. In appealing

[27] Conc. Arel., as before, p. 304.

from the sentence of their Catholic colleagues at Arles, the Donatist clergy besought the Emperor to judge their cause in person.

Constantine replied in a letter directed "to his dearest brethren the Catholic Bishops," but in reality addressed to both parties. It begins with reasons for the Emperor's interest in the Christian faith. "The eternal, sacred and incomprehensible love of our Deity doth not permit our mortal state to be involved too long in darkness. . . . . It cannot be told or enumerated how many things He hath granted to me in His celestial benevolence, O most venerable ministers of Christ the Saviour." Next follows the approval of the proceedings in the council. "I rejoice especially that your most just decision hath recalled to better hope and to better fortune those whom the malignity of the devil seemed to have turned away from the most glorious light of the Catholic law. . . . . And this I should have wished those to feel in whom the greatest hardness of heart appears to be inborn. But your correct judgment hath not availed with them, neither hath a suitable spirit entered into their minds."

The appeal of the Donatists is stigmatized as a proof of their "madness," their "arrogance," and their "malignity." "How often," exclaims the Emperor, "have their most wicked attempts to obtain my favor been repulsed by my merited refusals! . . . . . And now they ask judgment from me, me who am myself awaiting the judgment of Christ! I speak as the truth demands, when I say that the judgment of priests ought to be respected as though the Lord

Himself had judged within them. O the rabid audacity of their madness! What others are wont to do in civil causes, these have done in this by introducing an appeal. Nay, men are accustomed to appeal in civil causes by seeking judgment from a higher authority when that from a lower authority hath failed to give them justice. But these opponents of the law refuse a celestial judgment in demanding mine. Is this their reverence for Christ the Saviour!"[28]

The reverence of the Emperor, however, is not so profound as to prevent him from listening to the appeal of the condemned. "These things," continues the letter, "appear to be reprehensible. Yet do ye who follow the way of the Lord your Saviour be patient, and allow your adversaries to choose what they most prefer. If you see them persevere in their appeal, then depart with those whom the Lord hath deemed worthy of His service, and return to your homes..... For the rest, I have directed my officers to bring those wicked violators of their faith straight to my court, where they may remain if they will, until their death. I have also despatched letters to the Vicar Præfect of Africa, ordering him to send to the court as many as he shall find to have fallen into this madness. My determination is that things of this nature, which may provoke the greatest anger of the Celestial Providence, shall no longer be done by these men in presence of the glory of God."[29] It may seem as if Constantine accepted

[28] "Quid hi detractores legis, qui renuentes cœleste judicium, meum putaverunt postulandum? Sic sentire de Christo Salvatore!" Ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. p. 316.

[29] Ib., ib.

the Donatist appeal for the sake of supporting the decrees of the council. His language implies as much. But it must be remembered that the council had not only met in obedience to his orders, but decided in conformity to his decisions. In undertaking to judge an appeal from such a body, the Emperor was asserting his own authority.

"If ye can prove but one of your charges against Cæcilianus," he wrote to the Donatists, "I will adjudge him to be guilty upon all the rest."[30] Many delays occurred before the hearing of the contending Christians took place at the imperial city of Milan. It was a strange spectacle in the eyes of all men. The Heathen wondered at the condescension of their sovereign taking part in matters affecting the faith that had been proscribed by his predecessors. To the Christians it was a cause of equal amazement. Most of them exulted at obtaining the Emperor for an arbiter of their dissensions. Some, perhaps, with clearer vision, perceived the dependence in which they were placed by their recourse to the imperial tribunal. But there were probably very few, besides those who expected or who received an adverse decision, to lament that the independence of the Christians in time of persecution was vanishing in the time of protection.

The Catholic accounts glorify the patience and the impartiality displayed by the Emperor in hearing the appeal. It was in their favor, of course, that he pronounced his judgment sustaining the opinions and

[30] Ap. August, cited in the appendix to Optatus, and by Tillemont, Mém. Hist. Eccl., tom. vi. p. 56.

orders which he had previously published. "I have clearly seen," he wrote to his Vicar of Africa, "that Cæcilianus is a man endued with innocency, and observing the duties of his faith which he serveth as he ought to do. Nor is any evil to be discovered in him, as hath been represented in his absence by the deceitfulness of his adversaries." [31] It was then about a year after the session of the council at Arles. [32]

And now the cry against the Donatists became universal. Heathen and Christian would unite in reviling the party whom the Emperor had condemned. "Will ye dare," scornfully asked the Catholics, "to reject the decision of the authority from which ye yourselves demanded judgment?" [33] "We will," replied the Donatists. "Ye have filled the ears of our sovereign with falsehoods." [34] But they found Constantine resolute. An edict appeared denouncing death to all who refused submission to the imperial sentence in favor of the Catholic authorities. [35] At the same time the churches of the Donatists, with all their other possessions, were declared to be confiscated. [36] The melancholy conclusion at which the Catholic champion of the ensuing century arrives, is that the Donatists, had they triumphed, would

[31] Ap. August., Cont. Cresc., III. 82.

[32] Therefore, 316.

[33] "Cujus judicium flagitasti, ejus sententiam recusare audes?" August., ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. IV. p. 319.

[34] "Etiam imperatoris aures pravis suggestionibus inflatas." This was actually said at a later period. August., Brev. Coll., III. 37.

[35] Id., Cont. Ep. Parmen., I. 13.

[36] Id., Ep. 88, 93.

have been supported by similar ordinances against their adversaries.[37]

The dependence of the Christians upon their sovereign could hardly be more complete. The same authority to which they bowed as subjects of the Empire extended over them as members of the Church. Not they alone who yielded to the edicts or the executioners let loose against them were involved in this subjection. The Catholics who availed themselves of such means to humble their antagonists fell still lower in the scale. Nor was it many years before the Emperor, as if wearied of the dependence placed upon him, retracted the mandates respecting the contending parties in Africa.[38]

The Christians could not thus depend upon their sovereign without endangering their liberty. To trust to his power, was to diminish their trust in their own powers. To trust to his laws, was to diminish their trust in their own laws. The source of their possession of liberty, the source of their right to it, were thus equally obstructed. What they risked in relation to liberty, they risked in relation to union. The few in favor with the sovereign were urging their claims to precedence over the many to whom he gave no heed. This was not the union which had entitled the Catholic Church to its name.

With all this, the dependence of the Christians could never sink to the point at which the submis-

[37] August., Ep. 93.

[38] 321. See Constantine's letter, ap. Eus., Vit. Const., II. 66, and the other authorities appended to Optatus.

sion of the Heathen had been depressed for centuries. The sovereign to whom they bent the head or the knee was but a mortal like themselves. If he possessed an authority far superior to theirs, he was burdened by responsibilities of greater weight than they were obliged to bear. His claims to their submission might be answered from motives of interest as well as from feelings of subjection on their part. If he could serve them, still more if he could serve the cause that was dearer to many of them than any desires or possessions of their own, they were ready to submit to him. But if he was to use his authority in striking down their fortunes or their sacred hopes, the spirit of the martyr might be as quick to show itself as it had been at the first edict of persecution.

The shadowy valley now lay behind them. Before them rose a boundless prospect of realms and races over which the banners of Christian faith and Christian liberty were to be borne. The Empire was peopled with subjects weary of Heathen exactions and Heathen vanities.[39] On the Eastern borders lay the kingdom of Armenia, already professing Christianity.[40] Farther still opened the Persian territories, already numbering Christians amongst its inhabitants. Upon the northern frontiers, the captive and the missionary had already begun the conversion of the barbarian hosts that waited to break in wherever the imperial defences appeared to be

[39] Eusebius often remarks upon the disposition of the Heathen to join the Christians. IX. 8, X. 1.

[40] As early as 276. St. Martin, in his notes to Le Beau's history, tom. I. p. 76.

the weakest.[41] From such glimpses into the future the Christians returned to seek the favor of the monarch whose power was still the greatest in human hands. It might seem that the work before them was too mighty to be achieved by subjects without their sovereign.

[41] Upon the various conversions amongst the barbarians, see Constantine, ap. Eus., Vit. Const., II. 53; Soz., II. 6; Philostorgius, II. 5. A canon of Gregory Thaumaturgus (ap. Routh, Rel. Sac., tom. III. p. 256) relates to the Christians taken into captivity by the invaders of the time.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SOVEREIGN A CHRISTIAN.

"Pria Veneziano, poi Cristiano." — *Venetian Proverb.*

The sovereign on whom the Christians had become dependent was still a Heathen. He was bound to the ancient creed not only by his position as a ruler, but by that which he had taken upon himself as a priest. He was Chief Pontiff, as has been mentioned, besides being Emperor. His faith in the old religion had been tempered, it is true, by his consideration for the new. But he had not yet embraced the new. It was uncertain whether he would ever do so.

There was no other point, humanly speaking, of equal interest to the Christians with the conversion of Constantine. While he remained a Heathen, were it merely in name, he wore a menacing aspect to his Christian subjects. His favor towards them might be changed at any moment into aversion. Even if he continued to protect them, it would be at the risk of all independence on their own part. They could not keep in his good graces but by sub-

mission, undeviating and entire. Only in the event of his becoming as one of them, would their subjection be alleviated. Only thus, would they have any security in his protection. It became of more and more importance to them that he should be actually converted.

"It was then," says the Christian biographer, referring to the time when Constantine was preparing to make himself master of the Western provinces, "it was then that he perceived his need of more substantial resources than merely military ones. . . . . He therefore considered what deity he should seek for a helper. And as he considered, the thought occurred to him, how of the numerous individuals exercising supremacy before him, those who rested their hopes upon numerous gods . . . . had met with unhappy deaths; nor had any of their divinities interposed to rescue them from their calamities. His father alone, who had followed a contrary course in condemning the errors of his predecessors and in worshipping a single deity throughout his life, he alone had found a guardian and a protector of his authority, an author of everything that was good."[1] It is not to be understood from this that Constantius the father was a Christian. The deity chosen by him was Apollo, whom the more devout Heathen would naturally worship as the lord of light. Constantine seems to have improved upon the conception by adoring the sun as the lord not only of light, but of life.[2] "The god of his father," says the Chris-

[1] Eus., Vit. Const., i. 27.

[2] See the Panegyric by Eumenius, c. 21.

tian, who would fain have Constantine appear as a worshipper of his own Deity, "he held to be alone deserving of adoration."[3]

While in this frame of mind, Constantine beheld the visions to which allusion has been already made.[4] The inscription "With this conquer!" appeared upon a cross blazing above the sun at noon. What more natural than that this should pass for a sign of favor from the divinity habitually worshipped by the Emperor? The cross, if it were seen, could not have appeared so distinct to his eyes as the light with which it seemed to be illumined by the meridian sun. The day declined. The divinity whom Constantine adored sank beneath the night. But the darkness was irradiated with dreams of glory. Could it be the god of day who visited him? It must have struck him as uncertain. The night could not have been thought the season for the lord of light and of life to descend to his votary. Constantine doubted. But he was resolved, says the Christian, "to worship no other god than the one who had appeared to him." Agreeably to the commands received in his visions, the Emperor directed a standard to be prepared of purple and gold, surmounted by a crown with mystic letters. To this he gave the name of the Labarum.[5] Yet the preparation of the standard had not decided the point on which the Emperor was doubting. He had obeyed the mandates of the god. But who the god might be, was another question.

[3] Eus., Vit. Const., I. 27.
[4] Ch. X. note 83.
[5] Eus., Vit. Const., I. 30, 31.

To inform himself, if possible, he called about him priests, at first, we may suppose, from the Heathen rather than from the Christians. But the ministers of the ancient religion were at fault. It was not easy for them to explain the unusual apparition which their Emperor had beheld. Then the Christians may have come forward. They were more decided. The deity about whom the sovereign was questioning was declared to be "the Only Begotten Son of the One and Only God." The sign as yet uninterpreted was pronounced "the symbol of immortality, the trophy of the victory over death that had been gained by Him upon the earth." Constantine was far from being convinced. But he was persuaded to consult the Christian Scriptures.[6]

This was his first step towards conversion. But why was it taken? Was it simply because Constantine yearned for the truth? He sought to acquaint himself with a deity about whom he was in uncertainty. But it was because he was intent upon obtaining the glories which his celestial visitant had revealed to him. He had been promised victory. He had been assured of dominion. All this would be his if he could but find the proper god to adore.

He pressed forward to triumph at Rome. Still interested in fathoming the revelation which he had received, he found himself beset by the Christians. They attracted him as the most earnest prophets whom he had encountered. They should be rescued from their persecutors. They should be saved from

[6] Eus., Vit. Const., i. 32.

their own dissensions. It was possible, in Constantine's opinion, that they were right in affirming his deity and their God to be the same. He entered into their interests. It was his second step towards conversion.[7]

The motive to take it was the same that had already prevailed with Constantine. He was intent upon supremacy. He had established himself at the heart of the Empire. But the claims which Rome had once possessed, to the exclusion of all other cities in the imperial realms, were no longer universally recognized. The possessor of the ancient capital was not acknowledged as the possessor of the Roman dominion. Nor were Constantine's personal pretensions to the supreme power at all generally allowed. He had a colleague. He might have another and another competitor. To one in his position and with his aspirations, it was an important matter to be confessed the head of any class or of any party extending throughout the imperial provinces. Constantine put himself at the head of the Christians.

He was still occupied with their affairs, when hostilities broke out between him and his colleague Licinius. A truce occurred upon the latter's surrendering all his European possessions except Thrace and a part of Mœsia.[8] But a few years later, the war between the Emperors was renewed. The Chris-

[7] "Un Empereur qui voyait dans les Chrétiens non plus les ennemis du genre humain, mais simplement des hommes professant une religion différente de la sienne, était déjà à demi Chrétien." Beugnot, Destr. du Pagan., tom I. p. 53.

[8] 314, 315. Zos., II. 18 *et seq.*

tian biographer would have it that Constantine armed himself to defend the Christian subjects of Licinius. It is certain that Licinius had declared against them, apparently to gain the adherence of the Heathen. The report came that he had ordered or assented to an actual persecution of the Christians.[9] "The news of this," exclaims the Christian narrator, "was more than Constantine could bear. . . . . He hastened to the defence of the persecuted."[10]

In fact, he seemed to be marching for the Christians' sake. At the head of his army, the Labarum was borne by fifty men, "eminent," as the Christian avers, "for strength of body, excellence of mind, and the rightful observances of piety."[11] Christian priests likewise swelled the imperial train.[12] Such an aspect as was thus imparted to the expedition confirmed the supporters of both the Emperors. The Western sovereign was strenuously served by the Christians. The Heathen mustered strongly around his foe. "We," said Licinius to his soldiers, "are arrayed in the defence of our national deities. He who leads yonder host against us hath transgressed the laws by embracing atheistic doctrine. . . . . The day of battle will decide which of us is deceived. For it will settle the question between our divinities and those of our enemies. If it proves us to be the conquerors, then it will prove our gods to be the true helpers and defenders. But if our deities, being the most numerous, yield to the Deity

[9] Eus., Vit. Const., I. 49–56, II. 1, 2, and Hist., x. 8. Also, Soz., I. 7.

[10] Eus., Vit. Const., II. 3.

[11] Id., ib., II. 8.

[12] Id., ib., II. 4.

of Constantine, then let no one be doubtful as to the god whom he should adore." [13] Constantine agreed, as it were, to the test. He was willing to acknowledge that he had come to fight for the Christians. Their God, he urged, was upon his side, even as he, the Emperor, was upon God's side. It was the final step of Constantine towards conversion.

It was taken as the preceding steps had been taken. The desire of embracing the true faith was wholly subordinate with Constantine to the determination of advancing his own majesty. So that a creed promised him success and dominion, he was ready to become converted to it, whether it were the religion of subjects or of rulers, of his own people or of the people of foreign lands. He had matched himself against Licinius and the Heathen supporting him. The support of the Christians might not seem essential to Constantine. He had his veterans to fight for him. He had his partisans to sustain him. It was not indispensable that he should have the Christians amongst his adherents. But their co-operation was desirable. The more so that they were steadfast in maintaining their possession of a Divine favor by the aid of which Constantine would be certain to triumph. To make his cause surer, he was willing to credit, or to appear to credit the Christians. He would be their leader. He would be the worshipper of their Divinity.

The imperial convert pressed on through the dust

[13] Eus., Vit. Const., II. 5.

and blood of battle. He won the victory.[14] Licinius was put to death in order to make room for the sons of his conqueror, Crispus, Constantinus and Constantius, already declared Cæsars. The triumphant Emperor was fifty years old. It was time, if his age alone were considered, still more if his experiences with the Christians and the Heathen were weighed, to decide upon his faith. As he stood, he saw the Heathen lamenting, while the Christians were exulting over his victories. Faithful to his life-long purpose of strengthening his dominion, he resolved to take part with his most devoted subjects. He confessed himself converted. At last, the Christians would exclaim, at last, the Heathen would murmur, the sovereign is a Christian!

"It long ago appeared," declared the Emperor himself, "how great a difference there is between the strict observance of the most holy service of Christianity and the spirit of those opposing and despising it. But now, more manifest facts and more illustrious occurrences have declared the absurdity of doubt concerning the great power of the Great God. For those who faithfully obey the most venerable law, without venturing to violate any one of its commandments, receive abundant blessings, together with the amplest strength and the choicest hope for the enterprises before them. . . . . When the Empire was in danger of being utterly prostrated as by a fatal disease, when it was in want of succor and great relief, what solace, what remedy for the suffer-

[14] 323. Zosimus, II. 18 - 28. Auct. de Const. Magn., 16, 18, 29.

ing did not the Deity devise? He is to be considered the Deity who is alone and truly so, and who holds eternal power through all time. Nor is it an idle vaunt for him who confesses the benefits from the All-Good, to speak in solemn language. He sought my service and judged it useful in carrying out His will. From the northern coasts, ... urged by His superior power to dissipate the dangers encompassing all things, I have gone on in order that the human race might by my ministry be united in the service of the most holy law, and also that the most blessed faith might be increased under the Divine conduct." [15]

This was written in the full flush of victory. In calmer times, the professions of Constantine were the same. "When men praise my service," he said, "which had its source in the inspiration of God, do they not confirm the truth that he is the Author of my great deeds? Assuredly. For it belongs to God to do all that is greatest. It belongs to men to obey Him. . . . . All have beheld our combats, when the providence of God assured the victory to the people. All have witnessed God's favor to our prayers. . . . . Wherefore let all who follow after piety render thanks unto the Saviour of all for our safety and theirs, as well as for the prosperous estate of public affairs. Let all, with devout prayers and continuous litanies, entreat Christ to prolong His mercies

[15] Ap. Eus., Vit. Const., II. 24–29. These are passages from a decree addressed to the "Palestine provincials" whom it apparently relieved from the injuries inflicted by Licinius.

towards us. He is the unconquered ally and defender of the righteous. He is the Great Judge, the Guide to immortality, the Leader to actual life."[16]

These were fair professions. They seemed to promise all that the Christians had hoped to secure from the conversion of their sovereign. He was apparently one with them. He avowed himself the servant of the Deity whom they worshipped. He would not, he could not become the oppressor of his fellow-worshippers. They had no longer any reason to dread subjection. Could they fear that he, or that any to come after him, would stand in the way of their liberty?

This, and more than this, was feared by some. All could not be blind to the character of the sovereign who had been converted. No man ever lived of whom it could be more truly said that he was formed in various moulds. By turns a devotee and a sceptic, a madman and a sage, a fop and a boor, Constantine was a different being in different places and at different times. Though he pronounced himself a Christian, one day, there was no certainty that the morrow would not find him a Heathen, or worse than a Heathen.[17] Dependent as the Christians were, there must have been many to hesitate about confiding in so unstable a convert as their sovereign.

He was stable on one point. That was the reso-

[16] Orat. ad Sanct. Cœt., 26.

[17] Symmachus, pleading for the Heathen more than half a century afterwards, speaks of Constantine and his sons as "principes utriusque sectæ, utriusque sententiæ." Ep., x. 54.

lution to conquer and to rule. It was not here that he showed his fickleness, wherever besides he might waver or might change. The determination to make himself great was the secret, as has been related, of his conversion. Step after step was taken according to the prospect of the advantages to be secured by the imperial progress. The Labarum bore something more than the cross and its inscriptions. It sustained the image of the Emperor.[18] As a Christian, Constantine considered himself assured of greater power as a sovereign.

The perception of this could not but add to the uncertainty of the Christians with regard to the conversion of the Emperor. Could they hope for increased liberty? Would they not rather fear augmented subjection? Certain it seemed that the work of the Early Christians was far from being done.

[18] Eus., Vit. Const., I. 31.

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